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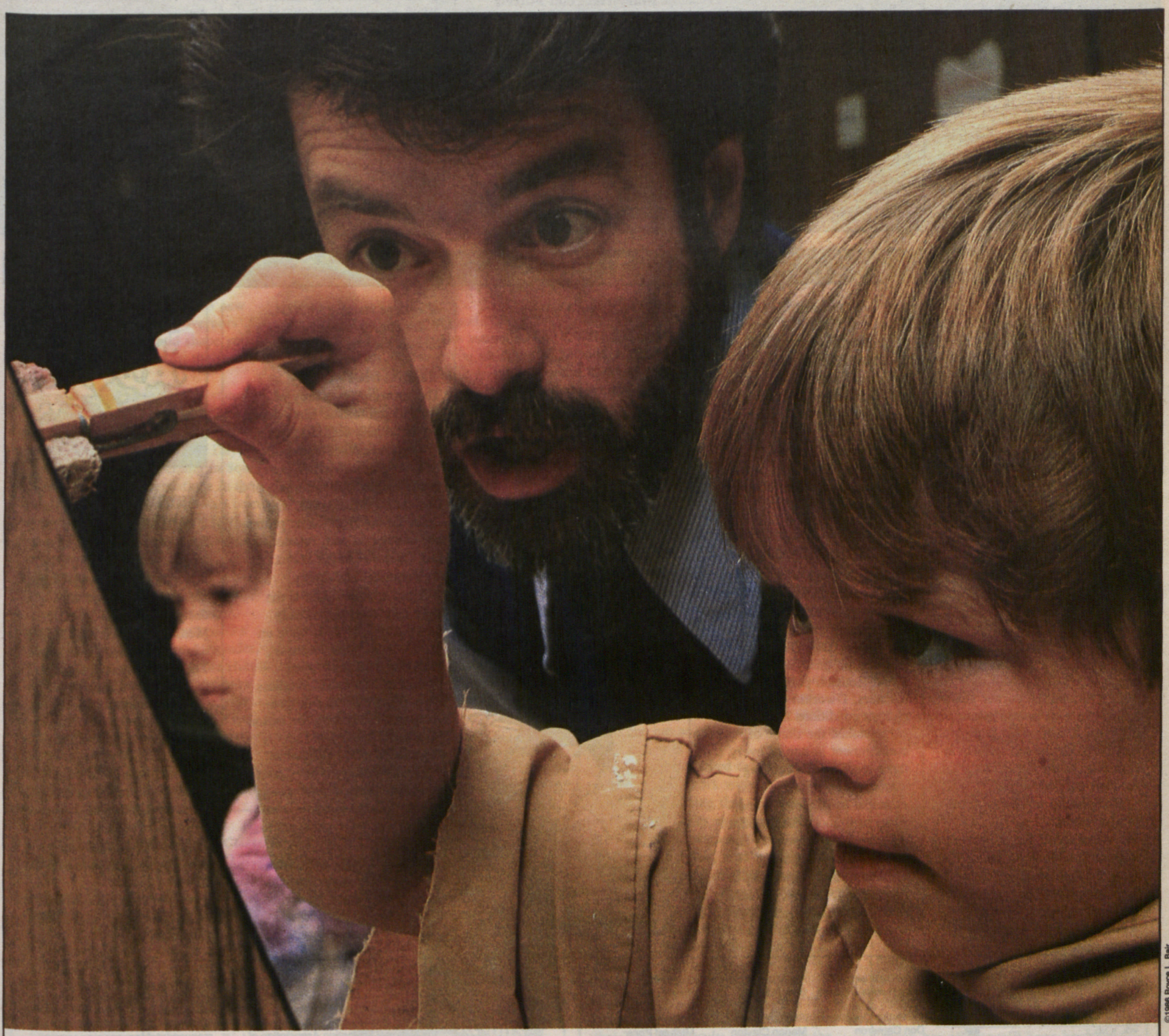
NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. VOL. 5, NO. 2 OCT 1986

A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



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A Fresh Start

See page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Remember November

The new school year is, I believe, off to a very good start. August ended with a truly remarkable event: the nation's governors, assembled at their annual meeting, pledged to make education their top priority. And they backed their rhetoric with an admirable agenda for action.

I'm gratified and encouraged by the attention governors are now giving education (please see the next page for details), but I think we all need to sit back a moment and reflect on the events that have thrust education to the forefront of political agendas throughout the nation.

Education is now receiving the attention it deserves because we NEA members have mastered the lessons of democracy. Over the past 15 years, we have become politically active. Only a dozen or so years ago, we were political action neophytes. Today, our political action committee—NEA-PAC—is the strongest grassroots force for public education in American history.

The contributions NEA members make to NEA-PAC—combined with the thousands of volunteer campaign hours worked weekends and evenings by Association members—helped elect 238 pro-education members of Congress in 1984. And at the state level, our contributions and campaign know-how have helped elect hundreds of pro-education officials and legislators.

We have built, in effect, our nation's first organized constituency for public education, a constituency that carefully analyzes candidate voting

Joe Di Dio

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

records, that contributes money to political campaigns, that freely volunteers time for leafleting and phone-banking, that votes—and influences voters.

That's why it's not surprising that the nation's governors have made education their top priority. And that's why it's not surprising that Congress has refused to accept the draconian cuts in federal aid to education proposed over the past six years by the Reagan Administration.

But we must realize one very important point. In politics, there's no such thing as resting on your laurels. An advocacy organization such as ours is only as politically effective as its performance in the last election. We can't afford to relax our political vigilance—especially not in 1986.

Some call 1986 an "off-year" election because the presidency is not at stake. Well, in my view, 1986 certainly will *not* be an off-year for education. The Congress elected this November—our nation's 100th—will be the Congress that determines how our nation addresses the problem of the mammoth federal deficit.

Will that deficit be "solved" by essentially ending federal support for education? Or will the deficit be erased by reducing exorbitant military expenditures? The choice will be up to the Congress elected this November.

We need to influence that choice—or suffer the consequences. And we all need to do our part.

Each of us has some very serious responsibilities—a responsibility to register and vote, a responsibility to compare where candidates stand on the issues, a responsibility, most of all, to play a leadership role in our communities and actively contribute our time and dollars to the candidates who share our commitment to education and to students.

November is still many weeks away. But our work to elect candidates committed to quality public education for all American students can't wait until Election Day is upon us. If we want to be effective in November, our work needs to start today. □

TRENDS

Back to the Present

Futurists—those pundits and prophets who try to tell us what's around the corner years before we turn it—too often direct us to dead ends, suggests Harold Hodgkinson, scholar in residence at the American Council on Education.

Hodgkinson notes that futurists have been predicting for years that the U.S. job market will be flooded with millions of new "high technology" jobs. True enough—*if* you include the packers, shippers, clerks, cashiers, and janitors employed by high-tech industries. But only 3 percent of the U.S. workforce does anything demanding the knowledge of science, math, and engineering that we associate with the world of bytes and chips and floppy discs.

Hodgkinson's advice to educators: "Instead of being futurists, it might be better if we became presentists."

Burning Issues

The single most effective antidote to teacher burnout is a supportive principal, according to University of Houston sociologist Gary Dworkin.

Based on interviews with 3,500 Houston public school teachers, Dworkin claims that current conditions have extinguished the flame of commitment in one of every three teachers. But among teachers who describe their principal as supportive and concerned about their welfare, the percentage reporting burnout drops dramatically.

"Supportive principals," concludes Dworkin, "break the functional connection between stress and burnout."

'Ya Know What Ah Mean, Vern?'

To attract students from a declining high school population, a growing number of colleges are keeping a close eye on the sales techniques of car dealerships. The lesson they're learning: prospective buyers look as closely at financing as they do at the sticker price.

At Washington University in St. Louis, a third of this year's freshman class locked in current prices by prepaying four years' tuition, room, and board. And Duquesne University in Pittsburgh now offers "tuition futures" that allow parents to enroll their newborns—at 1986 prices—for four years of college starting in 2004.

Stay tuned: manufacturer's rebates may be next.

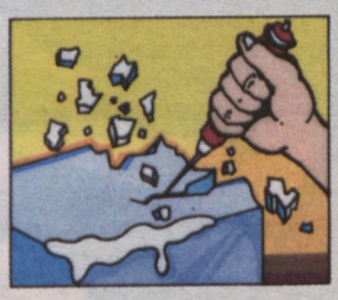
The Color Gray

The growing popularity of violent, militaristic films depicting politically complex issues in simplistic black-and-white-with-no-gray-anywhere terms doesn't signal the approach of a neo-conservative wave, suggests Young Hum Kim, professor of international relations at San Diego's United States International University.

What it does signal is the tight grip that dangerously naive political views have on our national consciousness. Kim traces the appeal of "Rambo" and other mindless media products to a failure—most notable among the nation's youth—to appreciate the complexity of world events.

We have, says Kim, "raised an entire generation of young people who have never been involved in war, yet seem to glorify war."

This situation, adds Kim, is not helped by certain world leaders who insist on dividing the world into "good" and "evil" empires.



Bummed Out To Get Fighting Chance

Foreigners serving in their nations' embassies in Washington speak textbook English but sometimes need help deciphering such dialects as Media, Commercial, Government, and Cocktail English. The Smithsonian Institution, in the interest of improved diplomatic communication, this summer offered a course in "American English in Washington, D.C."

Among the mind-mixers students were taught: lame duck, three-martini lunch, hung jury, yellow journalism, filibuster, finger foods, mud-slinging, hanging tough, talking turkey, breaking the ice.

Course materials included *Soap Opera Digest* and *Rolling Stone*. □

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EDUCATION REFORM

Which Way Is *Your* Guv Headed?

Nan Gibson/C-SPAN

South Carolina Governor Dick Riley reminds governors that higher educational standards may put youth with deficient skills at risk for academic failure—unless states take special initiatives to reduce that risk.

If your governor follows the new recommendations from the National Governors' Association, he—or she—will be actively involving you and your colleagues in NEA-backed initiatives to shift education decision-making to the school building level.

The nation's governors, for the first time ever, have set a common agenda for public education.

That agenda—spelled out in a new report from the National Governors' Association (NGA)—could shape your state's education agenda for the next five years.

The governors' new mission statement, entitled *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, was unveiled just before Labor Day at the 1986 NGA annual meeting in South Carolina. The recommendations in the report, governors say, add up to a comprehensive anthology of their "best advice to each other" on where school reform should go through 1991.

But *Time for Results* isn't just a blueprint for governors. It's also a request for help—the help of professional educators and their organizations. As Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander, then NGA chair, explained at the Hilton Head meeting: "Too many of us have spent too much time ... battling with educators to secure real reforms. Governors want a new compact with professional educators."

NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, invited to Hilton Head to react to the report, welcomed the governors' initiative. Leaders from more than a dozen NEA state affiliates also attended the NGA meeting—and echoed Futrell's reaction.

"*Time for Results* is good," President Futrell told the governors assembled at Hilton Head, "because you sat down and worked with teachers on it from the beginning."

The *Time for Results* project was commissioned at the 1985 NGA meeting. Seven NGA task forces held open hearings on education throughout the country during the last school year, and NEA leaders testified before each of the panels.

The *Time for Results* report urges governors to lead their states toward the creation of—

► A professional work environment for teachers. That work environment, the governors' report says, should provide teachers with higher salaries, as well as a real voice in decision-making and an active role in designing assessment procedures.

► A deregulated education system that limits state intervention and moves decision-making authority to the district and building level. The exception to that policy, says the report, would be "educationally bankrupt" school districts that consistently fail to educate their students to acceptable achievement levels. The state should take over such districts.

► Higher standards for teachers. Create a national board to define teacher standards, the report urges, and halt the issuance of emergency teaching certificates.

► More effective leadership at the school building level, including systems for rewarding effective principals and schools.

► Special assistance programs to help children who are at risk for school failure to succeed in school.

► Plans to efficiently integrate new technologies into schools.

► Year-round school calendars and the restoration of old buildings to make more efficient use of existing school facilities.

► Greater opportunities for parents to choose the public schools their children attend—under guidelines carefully developed to avoid elitism and segregation.

Many of the recommendations on the governors' list will undoubtedly turn up as proposals individual governors submit to the next session of their state legislatures. NEA leaders may not agree with all the proposals. But, as President Futrell candidly explained to the governors, "We'll tell you up front when we disagree, then I hope we'll find a compromise."

Futrell is urging the presidents of NEA state affiliates to build on the momentum generated by *Time for Results* by taking immediate steps to meet face-to-face with their governors. Karen Garr, president of the North Carolina Association of Educators, arranged the first such session, right at the NGA meeting.

"I hadn't been able to get an appointment directly with our governor—until after Mary's presentation to the governors in Hilton Head," she reported.

President Futrell urged the assembled governors not to delegate leadership on school reform to appointed officials.

"Keep it on your plate," she said. "No one has as much influence in your state as you do."

Futrell also warned the governors that reform cannot work without adequate funding, promising that "on that issue, we'll cooperate in any way possible."

Arkansas Education Association President Ed Bullington, who was also at Hilton Head, pointed out that a dollar can't be in two places at once: "If you dilute one reform to pay for another—class size reductions for teacher salary increases, or vice versa—then you haven't got reform any more."

NEA state and national leaders came away from Hilton Head convinced that *Time for Results* can serve as the basis for continued dialogue on education reform.

"I think that as the governors move to restructure our public schools," President Futrell concluded, "they will do so in a continued partnership with NEA members."

—Nancy R. Needham

The Governors' Education Report: Who Wrote It, How To Get It

Topics examined by the seven NGA task forces whose reports make up *Time for Results*, and the governors who chaired each group, were as follows: Teaching, Thomas H. Kean, New Jersey; Leadership and Management, Bill Clinton, Arkansas; Parent Involvement and Choice, Richard D. Lamm, Colorado; Readiness, Richard W. Riley, South Carolina; Technology, John H. Sununu, New Hampshire; School Facilities, Ted Schwinden, Montana; College Quality, John Ashcroft, Missouri.

To order *Time for Results*, send check or purchase order (payable to National Governors' Association) to 1991 Report on Education, NGA, 444 N. Capitol St., Washington, DC 20001-1572. 1-10 copies, $12.95 each; 11-25 copies, $10.95 each, 26 or more copies, $7.95 each.

News Beat

● This fall, high school and junior high **principals** throughout the U.S. are being provided with a unique new guidebook for education reform, jointly produced by NEA and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The guide, titled *Ventures in Good Schooling: A Cooperative Model for a Successful Secondary School*, is designed to help teachers and principals, working together, improve building-level instruction programs. Some 120 teachers and principals from Alabama, Maine, North Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin helped prepare the guidebook, which is also available through local NEA affiliates.

● A new study debunks the idea that **children of working mothers** don't do as well in school as kids whose mothers are home. Kent State University psychologist John Guidubaldi conducted the five-year study using a sample of more than 500 first, third, and fifth graders in 38 states. Among the findings: children with working mothers scored higher on IQ tests, had better communication skills, were more involved in school activities, and were rated higher in academic achievement by their teachers.

● About 22 percent of the nation's most highly recruited high school **football and basketball players** who received college athletic scholarships this fall failed to meet the new NCAA standards for grade point averages and standardized test scores, according to a *USA Today* survey of Division I colleges and universities. Most of those found ineligible had acceptable grades but inadequate test scores (less than 15 on the American College Test or a combined 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test). They may still get their scholarships but won't be able to play or practice in their freshman year.

WELL PUT!

Joe Di Dio

Steven McAuliffe, accepting NEA's Friend of Education Award on behalf of his late wife, Christa, July 4, 1986

"If you sit on the sidelines, reflect back on Christa as hero or as glorious representative or canonized saint, rather than putting your entire energies into accomplishing for her what she wanted to do, then I think her efforts will have been in vain. . . . I hope you will use Christa's efforts and her spirit to get involved in the political arena effectively. To recruit and elect education candidates. To unseat those who support education with their words but not with their appropriations."

BACK TO SCHOOL...

A New Year

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During first week of kindergarten in West Jordan, Utah, teacher Dean Mednick offers two budding five-year-old artists some suggestions for improving their crayon techniques.

After school, Barbourville, Ky., Chapter 1 math teacher Pam Farmer guides the Knox Central High girls softball team.

A brand-new academic year is under way, bringing new faces, new ideas, and a renewed sense of optimism to America's schools. For some NEA members, the new school year will mean major changes. Others will return to familiar surroundings recharged with fresh enthusiasm. For all who work in education, the opening of school is a very special time of year.

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Dean Mednick

Signs of a new school year: unmarked roll books, empty classrooms smelling of freshly waxed floors, that sense of new beginnings common to educators everywhere.

Some beginnings are newer than others, though, even for veteran teachers. Dean Mednick, kindergarten teacher at Oquirrh (pronounced *ochre*) Elementary in Utah's Jordan school district, began teaching year-round this summer.

"The district is moving some schools to a nine-weeks-on, three-weeks-off schedule for economic reasons," he explains. With swelling enrollments and limited numbers of teachers and classrooms producing the highest student-teacher ratio in the country, Utah is a place where reforms are made for very basic reasons—like getting class size below 40.

"The new schedule should be a plus for both students and faculty," Mednick adds. "Kindergartners will get used to coming to school on a regular basis, and the older kids won't forget as much.

"Teachers will always have a vacation to look forward to—so there should be less burnout at the end of the year."

Mednick, an eight-year kindergarten teaching veteran, has recalibrated his teaching units to fit into three-week intervals.

"When you plan something like a sock walk," he explains, "an activity in which kids drag an old sock through a field to pick up seeds, you have to make sure there's time for them to plant the seeds and see them sprout."

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Tamsen Mackay

Day One: "Mom, can't you stay with me while I'm at school?"

Day Four: "I can walk to school by myself."

A Saturday, three weeks later: "Why can't I go to school today?"

The words are five-year-old Tamsen Mackay's. Tamsen is just a few weeks into her public school education—she's a kindergartner at Oquirrh Elementary in West Jordan, Utah.

Unlike most of the more than 2 million other children who entered public school for the first time this fall, Tamsen started school in the middle of summer. In this suburb of Salt Lake City, school is now a year-round event.

For the Mackay family, the new schedule has meant some rearrangement of their routine, but "it's something we've adjusted to so far," says Carrie Mackay, a second grade teacher at Bennion Elementary and the mother of two other small children, one only a few weeks old.

Having taught elementary kids for six years, Carrie Mackay wasn't all that surprised at Tamsen's initial nervousness and anxiety about kindergarten. What she hoped for most—like any other mother—was that Tamsen would adjust to her new school, her classmates, and her teacher, Dean Mednick.

"Tamsen had a normal reaction to this first-time experience," says Carrie Mackay. "She was a little scared and apprehensive. What I hoped for—and what appears to have happened—was that her teacher would be firm and let the kids know what he expects from them, but show them genuine affection and concern.

"On the other hand," she adds, "I'm sure her teacher felt like I've felt. 'Will I be able to reach my students this year? Will they respond?' No matter how many years you've been teaching, you always get those first-day jitters, wondering what this new school year and a new group of students will bring."

Keith Williams

Pam Farmer

When some 500 K-8 students returned to G.R. Hampton Elementary in Barbourville, Ky., in mid-August, Pam Farmer was ready. With just one year of teaching behind her, Farmer nonetheless felt more than a year wiser in the ways of reaching her Chapter 1 math students.

Farmer is one of those teachers who's always known what she wanted to do in life. She's convinced that the classroom "is where I'm supposed to be, where I want to be."

Yet even as she looked ahead to this new year, her first-year experiences remained firmly fixed in her mind. Though her undergraduate training had prepared her well, the students she encountered while student teaching in the university community of Richmond, Ky., were worlds apart from the third through eighth graders she faced at rural Hampton Elementary.

Barbourville (pop. 3,300) is in the southeastern corner of Kentucky, near the Tennessee and Virginia boarders.

"Here, many of the children are from poor families with parents who themselves are poorly educated and may not emphasize education," explains Farmer.

Taking a part-time job in a local grocery store and attending school sports events helped Barber understand her new students' backgrounds—and let her meet a number of parents she might never have seen had she waited for them to attend parent-teacher conferences.

...WITH A DIFFERENT TWIST

A New Start

John Stormzand

For Southfield, Mich., elementary custodian Karl Bell, getting ready for a new year includes scouring school walls.

John Daughtry

Sara Castillo enlivens her Rock Hill, S.C, high school Spanish classroom with 'no smoking in the subway' and other posters she brought back from her summer in Madrid as a Rockefeller Fellow.

Even though Farmer was the school's youngest teacher, she found parents accepted her and trusted her judgment. At least as important, she found acceptance from her colleagues.

Farmer understands that some of her students—particularly seventh and eighth graders—are resentful that they're in her remedial, "pull-out" math classes while their friends are in "regular" classes. She tries to make her classes something special, with extra incentives, more time on the school's computers, and lively bulletin board displays.

Later this month, Farmer will administer a series of tests to see if her students are up to grade level in math and therefore eligible to move back into regular math classes. She'll repeat these same tests next April.

Farmer would like nothing better than for all her students to move out of her special math classroom. She knows that's not likely, but it won't stop her from trying to make it happen.

John Stormzand

Karl Bell

The head custodian at Adlai Stevenson Elementary School in Southfield, Mich., surveys the 300 students returning to start another school year and reflects on the familiar newness he's observed for nine Augusts now: the pinch-crease seams, celebrity lunchpails, and patent leather shine.

"I'm a twelve-month employee, but I share in the excitement of the new year," Karl Bell says. "We spend half the summer getting the building in shape for that first day."

Before the students arrive, Bell and the two other maintenance workers survey the school plant from top to bottom, checking out the playground equipment, the seals on the windows, and the functioning of the boiler. They steam-clean the asphalt and remove graffiti from walls and desks.

"It always gets lonely here over the summer without the kids and teachers," Bell admits. "I just bide my time, telling myself I'll be seeing them soon.

"I like the one-on-one contact with both students and teachers," he says. Bell especially enjoys lunching with teachers in Stevenson's joint lunchroom for teachers and support personnel.

Bell already knows many of the older students at Stevenson on a first-name basis. Each fall he generally gets acquainted first with those who work in the kitchen, but it's not long before he's a familiar presence to the entire student body, right down to the newest kindergartner.

Children come to him with such solemn requests for help that he can't turn them down. Once a nine-year-old came to report he'd lost his brand-new catcher's mitt.

"Can you help me find my glove?" he sobbed. After a three-hour search, Bell was able to produce the glove for the beaming young boy—who only then admitted he attended school in another district.

Now, three years later, the boy's written expressions of thanks and love are still posted in Bell's office.

Joe Di Dio

Nancy Chicola

In the suburban Denver school district of Cherry Creek, curriculum/behavioral specialist Nancy Chicola has just begun a year-long special assignment.

"In my regular job I consult with elementary teachers about individualizing instruction for handicapped students," she explains. "This year what's exciting is that I'm doing the same for nonhandicapped students, K through 12."

"My final product," Chicola says, "will be a manual that classroom teachers can use to find tactics to help counter any learning problem that's likely to come up."

Chicola will spend the first semester identifying Cherry Creek's most effective individualized instruction programs. Then she'll join four other "TOSAs"—teachers on special assignment—to demonstrate the best strategies to teachers throughout the district.

John Daughtry

Sara Castillo

Sara Hudson Castillo returned this fall to Fort Mill High School in Rock Hill, S.C., eager to share the experiences of an eight-week study program in Madrid. Castillo spent her summer studying art history and videotaping about 10 hours' worth of informal conversations with Spanish teenagers.

This unique opportunity was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation under a new program to recognize and encourage exceptional foreign language teaching in U.S. high schools. The 95 Fellows were chosen from nearly 900 applicants; each was awarded $4,500.

Castillo videotaped middle and upper class kids inside their houses as much as she could—or in shopping malls. "I wanted my students to hear and see how people really speak," she explains, "with slang, incomplete sentences, and all—and to understand that not everyone abroad lives in a hut, as they'd be led to believe by our school's textbooks and films.

"The kids in Madrid talked about the rigors of their schools, which are far different from what's demanded in the U.S.," Castillo adds. "These kids were in the midst of exams—studying their buns off. It's good for our students to see that."

Castillo also took a class in art history, through St. Louis University's branch in Madrid. "It was the best class I've ever had, with a fabulous professor," she says. "I got wonderful things from it. But art is culture with a big C. You have to be very careful about laying slides on high school kids—they turn off quickly."

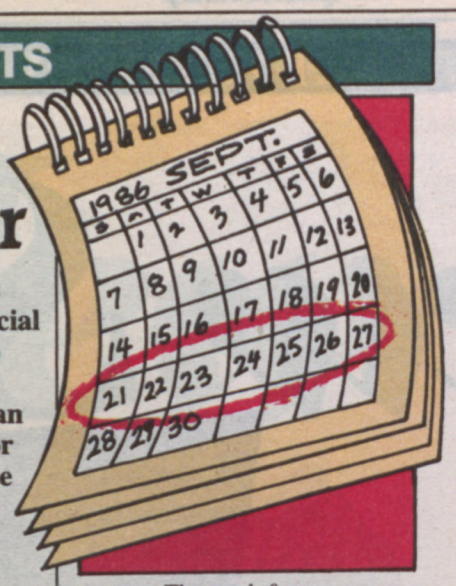
Though Castillo had travelled to Spain five times before, this was her first time at managing the details of actually living there.

"Buying groceries, getting shoes fixed—all those little daily things teach you a lot," she notes.

—Bill Fischer, Vicky Lytle, Ann Kurzius, Nancy Needham

HUMAN RIGHTS

Honoring Diversity Throughout the Year



Here's a calendar of ethnic and women's observances you may want to clip and save. Celebrating these special days, weeks, and months with your students can help teach respect for others all year round.

A list of more than 50 heroes and heroines in human rights history, keyed to the dates most appropriate for studying their lives and achievements, is available free from NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

September

► **National Hispanic Heritage Week**. Sept. 14-20. Honors the heritage of all Hispanic groups. The week specifically commemorates Sept. 16, 1810, the beginning of the revolution for Mexican independence from Spain, achieved 11 years later. 1987 theme: "Herencia: El Derecho al Futuro" ("Heritage: Legacy to the Future").

► **American Indian Day or Week**. Fourth Friday (Sept. 26) or last week in September. Commemorates the fall harvest time as well as Indian contributions to American history. (Note: several states now observe American Indian Day in May, which gives schools more time to plan an observance than does the more widely observed September date.)

October

► **Dia de la Raza (Columbus Day)** Oct. 12. The day when Latin Americans celebrate their culture.

December

► **Kwanza**. Dec. 26. A seven-day Afro-American family holiday observed since 1969. It recognizes African harvest festivals and the unity of the family. (Kwanza means "first fruit" in Swahili.)

January

► **Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr**. King's birthday—Jan. 15, 1929—is now a national holiday observed on the third Monday in January—this year, Jan. 19. A day for teaching about the civil rights movement and Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence—and for getting involved in nonviolent action for social change.

February

► **Black History Month**. Commemorates the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809) and Frederick Douglass (Feb. 14, 1817). The month's purpose is to publicize the contributions of Blacks to American history. 1987 theme: "The Afro-American and the Constitution."

March

► **National Women's History Month**. This observance commemorates March 8, 1857, when women textile and garment workers in New York City demonstrated against low wages and 12-hour workdays.

May

► **Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week**. May 3-9. Commemorates the heritage of all Asian/Pacific American groups. The week focuses on May 7, 1843, when the first Japanese immigrant entered the United States. (This was Manjiro Nakahama, also known as John Mung, who was rescued at sea by a whaler and brought to New Bedford, Mass.) The week also commemorates May 10, 1869, when workers hammered the golden spike connecting the two ends of the continental railroad. (Chinese Americans made up 90 percent of the workers on the Central Pacific Railroad.)

► **Cinco de Mayo**. May 5. A Mexican holiday observed by many Mexican Americans. It commemorates General Ignacio Zaragoza's 1862 victory over invading French forces at Puebla, about 100 miles from Mexico City. Even though France subsequently placed Emperor Maximilian on the throne and occupied Mexico from 1864 to 1867, the battle of Puebla signifies the beginning of the resistance to French colonialism.

► **American Indian Day**. May 9 or second Saturday in May. Commemorates the date in 1915 when the American Indian Association issued its first formal appeal to the President to make Indians citizens of the U.S. (Citizenship was achieved on June 22, 1924.)

Materials for Celebrating Special Days

American Indian/Alaska Native

Historic Indian Publishers, P.O. Box 16074, Salt Lake City, UT 84116: series of 54 maps and charts about American Indian history, geography, economics, and sociology. $8 per guide, $6 per color map/chart, $5 per black-and-white map/chart. Write for a free list. An accompanying teacher's guide is available for $8 from the **Utah Board of Education,** 250 East Fifth South, Salt Lake City, UT 84411.

U.S. Department of Education, Department of Indian Education, Resource and Evaluation Centers: materials about American Indians/Alaska Natives, plus assistance in training, educational project management, curriculum development, and evaluation. Write the center nearest you for information: 1411 K St., N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005; 3315 South Airport Rd., Bismarck, ND 58501; 1945 Yale Place East, Seattle, WA 98102; 2121 S. Mill Ave., Suite 206, Tempe, AZ 85282; 9810 E. 42nd St., Suite 211, Tulsa, OK 74146.

Asian/Pacific Islander

Japanese American Curriculum Project, 414 East Third Ave., San Mateo, CA 94401: curriculum development assistance, in-service training, and resources for elementary and secondary teachers and students. $2 catalog lists records, journals, audiovisual materials, dictionaries, language books, games, and dolls.

Asian Pacific Heritage Council, P.O. Box 8135, Rockville, MD 20856: commemorative materials will be available about one month before the May observance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week, including presidential proclamation, poster, and educational packet.

Black

Afro-Am Distributing Company, 910 South Michigan Ave., Suite 556, Chicago, IL 60605: free catalog listing records, filmstrips, and books for Black and multicultural studies.

The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1401 14th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005: *1987 Black History Month Kit*, full of materials on the 1987 theme; $48.50 plus $3.00 shipping and handling.

GRIO', 5070 Parkside Ave., Suite 1420, Box 67, Philadelphia, PA 19131: *Grio': The Praise Singer*, an annual magazine covering people and events in African-American history. $5.95 plus $1.95 postage and handling. Ask about classroom sets.

Hispanic

Information Systems Development, 1100 East 8th St., Austin, TX 78702: Chicana Studies Curriculum Guide; *La Chicana: Building for the Future*; *Diosa y Hembra*: History and Heritage of Chicanas in the U.S.; and *Feminism: The Chicana and Anglo Versions*. Write for a free publications list; enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Center for Mexican Studies—Publications Unit, Student Services Building 4.112, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712: monographs and books, including *Chicana Voices*, *Mexican Americans and Mexican Immigrants: An Evolving Relationship*, and (in press) "*Let All of Them Take Heed*": *Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality, 1929-1981*. Write for a free publications list; enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. 449 Auburn Ave., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30312: free catalog includes books by and about Dr. King, children's books, records, tapes, posters, pictures, speeches, printed quotations, and souvenir items.

Women

National Women's History Project, Box 3716, Santa Rosa, CA 95402: *1986-87 Resource Catalog*, listing books, curriculum units, posters, films, and manuals. $1.

WASHINGTON WATCH

Tried and True vs. Shiny and New

Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill recently championed a major federal initiative to eradicate drug abuse. His action stemmed from a longstanding national frustration with a pervasive problem. But it was sparked by the drug-related death of a single individual, basketball star Len Bias.

By election day, dozens of other political leaders will have tried to grab the spotlight on drugs, trying—in the words of Ambrose Burnside—to get there firstest with the mostest.

Although they will vehemently deny it, what drives America's policymakers are the three R's of politics: (voting) Record, Recognition, and Reelection. And politics is driven by the media.

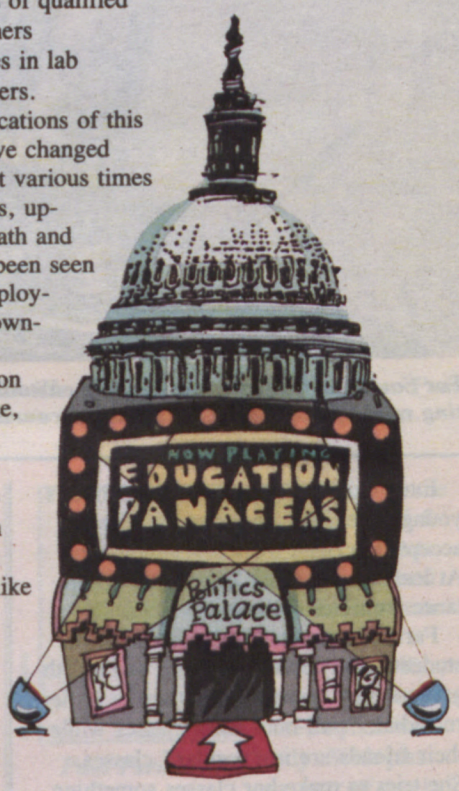
An event captures the media's imagination. Assignment editors launch a thousand reporters to illuminate a trend. And suddenly a longstanding problem becomes the issue of the hour.

Education is often the beneficiary—or victim—of this phenomenon. For example, long before the current education reform movement began, analysts were pointing to a growing need to upgrade math and science education. The trends were clear enough:

► A precipitous drop in math and science enrollments at the secondary level

► Critical shortages of qualified math and science teachers

► Major deficiencies in lab equipment and computers.



The perceived implications of this problem, however, have changed with the media tide. At various times over the past five years, upgrading high school math and science programs has been seen as the answer to unemployment, the economic downturn in key industries, international competition and the trade imbalance, and national security needs.

In Washington, proposals for dealing with the math/science crisis have bounced around like a pinball:

► Tax credits for businesses that grant their employees release time to teach math and science

► Merit pay for math and science teachers

► Loan forgiveness for math and science majors who teach for a specified number of years

► Stronger math and science requirements for graduation.

Tax credits, merit pay, bringing in people with math and science backgrounds but without teacher training and credentials—these were all dramatic, radical solutions, solutions that teachers never asked for.

Meanwhile, NEA members have pursued a steady, albeit obvious, three-part approach to the problem, calling for—

► A general aid program to provide federal dollars to help school districts purchase equipment, expand and improve program offerings, and hire qualified staff.

► An end to policies that let individuals teach in subject areas for which they are inadequately prepared.

► Higher salaries for all teachers to prevent shortages, not just in math and science, but also in foreign languages, special education, elementary education, and other areas.

"Members of Congress have always been more interested in passing new laws than in adequately funding old ones," points out Ken Melley, NEA's director of Government Relations/Political Affairs. "The task for NEA members is to keep congressional attention on effective, existing programs."

Melley explains that when members of Congress have information about the success of federally funded education programs, education can become an example to constituents of one way the federal government is responsive to people's needs.

Says Melley, "The way to counteract the political urge to follow everything that's shiny and new is to show what's new and exciting about a program that's been in place for years."

—Michael Pons

State Side

WEST

Bipartisan political action is beginning to pay off for public education in Utah: both state party platforms now call for a tax increase for schools.

But at the GOP convention this past summer, passage of this plank was a close call. Gov. Norman Bangerter and several legislator-delegates spoke for it, but opponents tried three times to remove it from the draft platform.

One reason the plank stayed afloat was consistent voting by the 200-member educator caucus.

"Those close votes were a spectacular example of how educators can make big things happen," reports caucus activist Jim Campbell, who is vice-president of the Utah Education Association and chair of NEA's recently organized GOP caucus.

Utah educators *need* big things to happen: UEA members are currently carrying out a statewide plan designed to pressure the legislature to find new sources of financing for the state's overcrowded, underfunded public schools.

NORTHEAST

A $375 million education "enhancement" package that's expected to boost starting teacher salaries to at least $20,000 and usher in other major reforms was signed into state law in July by Connecticut Gov. William A. O'Neill.

The Connecticut Education Association–backed legislation provides state funds to reimburse towns for the total cost of raising all teacher salaries to at least $20,000 over the next three years.

The package also provides districts with $500 per teacher in incentive grants to develop teacher evaluation and career incentive plans. Other provisions include $188 million worth of raises for experienced teachers, creation of a statewide institute for effective teaching, and $35.7 million to increase Connecticut's teaching population by 5 percent over the next three years.

Comments CEA President Ed Dorsett: "Both for us and for the students we serve, this law is a major stepping-stone on the path leading into the 21st century."

SOUTHEAST

The junior high science teacher is breaking up a fight in the hall when a student hits her—hard—knocking her out of school for 20 days. Does the school district give the teacher a certificate of appreciation?

Hardly. At the beginning of the next school year, she gets a dismissal notice—for having missed too many days. Only several months' hard work by the Louisiana Association of Educators saves her job—and lets her gain tenure.

Admittedly, the teacher had used up all her sick days in a prior illness. But she'd had good evaluations for her two years in the district, and her principal had recommended her for rehiring.

Her dismissal stemmed from the new superintendent's insistence on cracking down on teacher "absenteeism."

"The LAE staff worked as long as it took to convince the school board to put me back to work and give me credit for the time I'd lost," recalls the teacher, who wishes to remain anonymous. "If it hadn't been for them, I would have been out of my job."

MID-ATLANTIC

About half of Delaware's 5,700 teachers are taking home far fatter paychecks this year than last. The biggest pay hike ever—signed into law in June—provides increases ranging from 14.4 percent for beginning teachers to 7.46 percent for 15-year veterans with doctorates.

The raises are important, the Delaware State Education Association points out, because Delaware schools recruit some 70 percent of their teachers from out of state. Surrounding states have traditionally offered higher salaries.

While the increases are significant, they still aren't big enough to make Delaware competitive, says DSEA. The Association is especially concerned about the relatively small pay hikes provided to teachers with more than 15 years' experience, who are off the salary scale for their education level (some 50 percent of the total teaching force).

"The state has actually compounded the teacher shortage problem," DSEA President Mary Ann Galloway says, "since these invaluable, experienced people will have little financial incentive to remain."

PACIFIC

No matter who wins in the November general election for the Idaho legislature, public education is a sure victor.

Last spring Idaho voters defeated six of the most ultra-conservative incumbents in the Republican primary. All had based their legislative careers on attacking the public schools, school employees, and particularly the Idaho Education Association and NEA.

Political commentators throughout the state called the primary a victory for "the forces of electoral sanity"—and predicted that the terms of legislative debate will be significantly altered next session.

IEA members waged a strong political action effort on behalf of the six lawmakers' GOP challengers.

"Idaho's voters sent a clear message that they're tired of the ultra-right wing shenanigans of the past several years," says IEA President Joyce Raasch. "They want their legislators to start addressing our state's real problems, the decline of public education among them."

MIDWEST

Futurist David Pearce Snyder concluded the North Dakota Governor's Conference on Public Education by urging participants to develop a vision for education, but for many educators the vision consisted mainly of dollar signs.

The North Dakota Education Association and other statewide education groups had worked with the governor's office to set up the August conference.

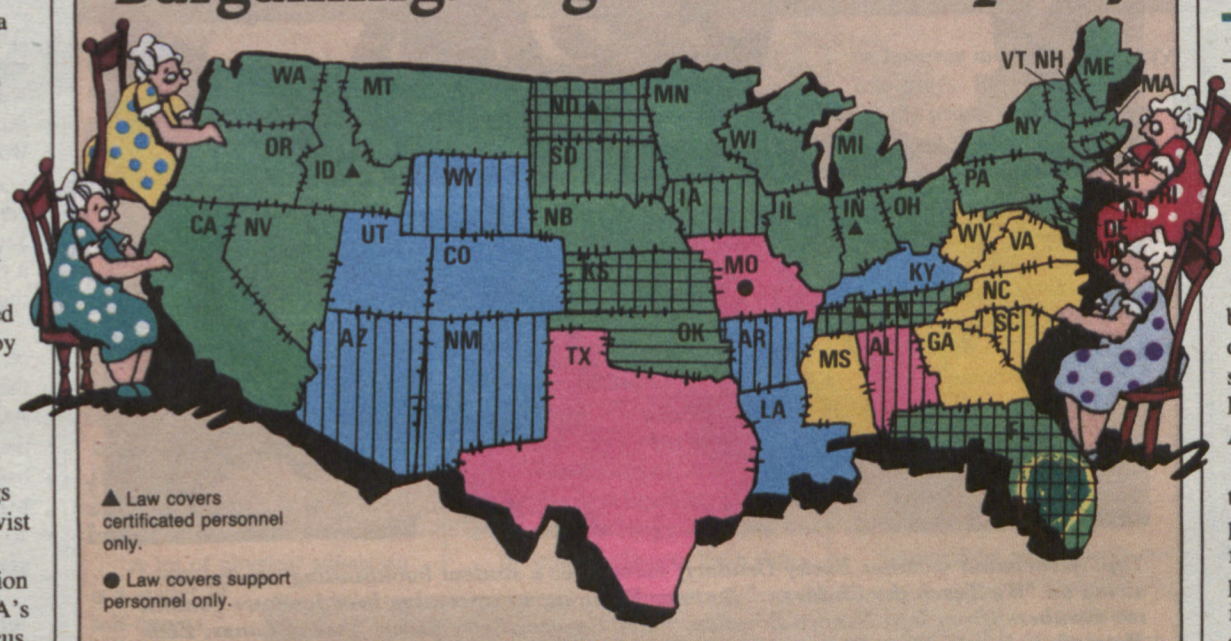
No matter how much Snyder chided the 500 attendees about being stuck on "short-term realities," many insisted it will take higher salaries, new technology, and more respect to advance education in the state.

A school administrator offered one example of the power of money: "I lost an excellent student teacher last year; Texas offered her a starting salary of $22,000." North Dakota's average starting teacher pay is just over $14,000.

"If the conference accomplished nothing else," notes NDEA member Don Hoff, "it united teachers, administrators, and state officials on one point: education must be spared deep funding cuts." □

'CRAZY QUILT' PATTERN REMAINS

Bargaining: Legal Climate Spotty



33 states provide collective bargaining by statute for education employees

8 states allow collective bargaining without a law

3 states permit "consultation" by at least some education employees

6 states do not allow education employees to bargain collectively

13 states have "right to work" laws prohibiting agency fee

6 states have "sunshine" laws requiring bargaining sessions to be open to the public

While the National Labor Relations Act permits workers in the private sector to engage in collective bargaining with their employers over hours, wages, and working conditions, no federal law grants bargaining rights to public employees. So bargaining in the public sector continues to be governed by widely varying state laws.

Only 33 states have statutes mandating bargaining by public school and college employees. In eight states where there's no statute, strong local Associations have managed to institute collective bargaining anyway—but the absence of a legal framework tends to bring about conflict over basic procedural matters.

Three states have "meet and confer" laws allowing nonbinding "consultation" on matters of concern to some or all school employees, but no real bargaining. In the remaining six states, education employees don't have even this minimal right.

In certain states, other kinds of laws also help determine the bargaining climate. So-called "sunshine" or open meeting laws, now on the books in six states, mandate that any bargaining session between a school board and an Association be open to the public.

In 13 states, agency fee or "fair share" arrangements are prohibited by "right to work" laws, which let nonjoiners reap the benefits of Association representation without contributing a penny.

Local Look

VERMONT

The bitterest labor dispute in Vermont-NEA history concluded in triumph this summer as the Hinesburg elementary school teachers who'd been ousted from their jobs for over a year were invited back to the classroom under court order.

The Hinesburg school board improperly replaced the teachers during an April 1985 strike. In August 1985, the Vermont Labor Relations Board found that the school board had engaged in unfair labor practices and ordered the board to reinstate the teachers, but the board appealed.

Now the state supreme court has upheld the VLRB ruling, ordering the district to offer reinstatement, with back pay, to the 22 teachers who submitted offers to return to work last fall.

"We've seen a just cause vindicated," notes Myrtle Kimball, president of the Hinesburg Teachers Association, a unit of the Chittenden South Education Association.

At least 13 of the 22 teachers have expressed an interest in returning to their jobs.

OREGON

Curriculum decisions in the Sherwood school district are made by a unique four-member curriculum council—composed entirely of classroom teachers.

The council, now in its third year, replaces the district's curriculum director. It makes decisions and recommendations to the administration and school board on textbooks, new curriculum, and staff development.

Sherwood, a Portland suburb, is a K-12 district of about 1,000 students. The council is composed of a full-time coordinator on release time, plus one teacher from each of the district's three schools.

"The council's been a real success," says Sherwood Education Association President Janice Bahn. "Teachers feel much more involved with curriculum decisions because they're made by colleagues.

"Another benefit," adds Bahn, a fifth grade teacher and council member, "is that our curriculum is more reflective of the reality of our classrooms."

OHIO

The 1,700-member Dayton Education Association has won the biggest back-pay award in Ohio teacher history: $400,000.

The Dayton school board conceded it hadn't given 122 DEA members proper salary credit for their substitute teacher experience. The admission came just before DEA's lawsuit on the teachers' behalf was scheduled for a hearing.

The dispute began back in 1979, when several DEA members read in an Ohio Education Association publication that under Ohio law, anyone teaching at least 120 days of a school year in one district was entitled to a year's credit on that district's salary schedule. Dayton school board policy had long been to grant substitutes such credit only if they worked 60 or more *consecutive* days.

In 1983, an Ohio supreme court ruling established that the state law granting a year of salary credit for 120 days of teaching was meant to include substitute teaching.

"But," points out DEA President Jeffrey Mims, "it was only the Association's perseverance that caused the board to agree to settlement."

TENNESSEE

For the 100-member Smith County Education Association, the path to a first contract was nearly six years long—and it wasn't smooth.

When teachers chose SCEA as their bargaining agent back in 1981, the school board promptly stopped allowing dues checkoff—and also stopped paying for a well-established group insurance plan. SCEA sued, charging both actions were illegal attempts to punish teachers for supporting the Association.

The case wound its way through the courts, with the state supreme court in 1984 upholding an appeals court decision that the board had acted in bad faith and must reinstate both insurance and checkoff provisions.

Now SCEA has negotiated a three-year contract that provides an insurance plan, a grievance policy, sick leave and a sick leave bank, dues checkoff, the posting of vacancies, and a pay raise that lifts salaries above the state-mandated minimum for the first time, by $204. The contract also provides for annual salary and insurance reopeners.

MINNESOTA

Attention, educators: accepting employment in Sauk Centre would be detrimental to your professional growth and livelihood.

Attention, parents and educators: current conditions in Sauk Centre's schools preclude a productive teaching and learning environment.

That's the twofold message of a "professional advisory" the Minnesota Education Association has issued against the Sauk Centre school district, based on the findings of an MEA task force. Sauk Centre's 70 teachers are still working under their 1982-83 contract.

The school board has repeatedly refused to arbitrate its differences with the Sauk Centre Education Association, and the breakdown in the board–teacher relationship has caused many educators to leave the district—and enrollment in the nonpublic schools to grow disproportionately.

TEXAS

This fall a new McKinney Education Association represents the teachers of McKinney, a town north of Dallas.

That's because last April, members of what was then the McKinney Classroom Teachers Association voted 150 to 24 to disaffiliate from the Texas Classroom Teachers Association and to reaffiliate with the Texas State Teachers Association and NEA.

TCTA members in McKinney found they belonged to an organization that couldn't protect them from arbitrary actions taken by the district as it implemented the state's 1983 and 1984 reform bills.

"The district was ignoring parts of the new laws that were inconvenient, such as the requirement for a duty-free lunch for teachers," explains art teacher Georgene Wood, a former MCTA officer who is president of the new MEA.

"Officials were manipulating the criteria for the new career ladder in such a way that few teachers could qualify for the first level," Wood adds. "Negotiations were getting nowhere. Then an administrator tried to trade career ladder status for sexual favors. That brought everything to a head. We decided it was in the best interest of our members to go with a stronger organization." □

PUTTING ON A SHOW IN VIRGINIA

Joe Di Dio

Joe Di Dio

Top: Association member Becky Orndorff videotapes a student bookbinding session for airing on "We Teach the Children." Bottom: Planning an upcoming broadcast are committee members (from left) Nancye Bowman, Patsy Ryman, Betty Carey, Sharon Lonas, Elsie Howard, Valley UniServ Director Gloria Wilson-Miller, and Debbee Baker.

Community Tunes In to Its Schools

Parents and children in Virginia's Shenandoah County don't need TV listings to help them decide what to watch Monday afternoons at 4:30. For them, there's only one choice—*We Teach the Children*, a local program that airs on both cable and commercial channels.

The half-hour show features students, parents, teachers, and administrators from the county's 13 schools. They sing, read stories, demonstrate crafts, offer parenting hints, and talk about what's going on in the 5,000-pupil rural school district.

Program content is decided by a volunteer committee of seven of the Shenandoah County Education Association's 452 members—all novices at putting on a TV show.

"We learn as we go along," admits Debbee Baker, a kindergarten teacher at W.W. Robinson Elementary School in Woodstock, who chairs the group.

It was Baker who got the show rolling after the superintendent approached her—as immediate past president of the local—and asked if she'd be willing to develop a weekly TV production. The owner of a local station had proposed the idea and contributed a time slot. Baker was enthusiastic—and the show debuted last December.

There's never been a lack of material, as teachers continually submit tapes of classroom events. Every school has access to a video camera—and at least one person trained to run it.

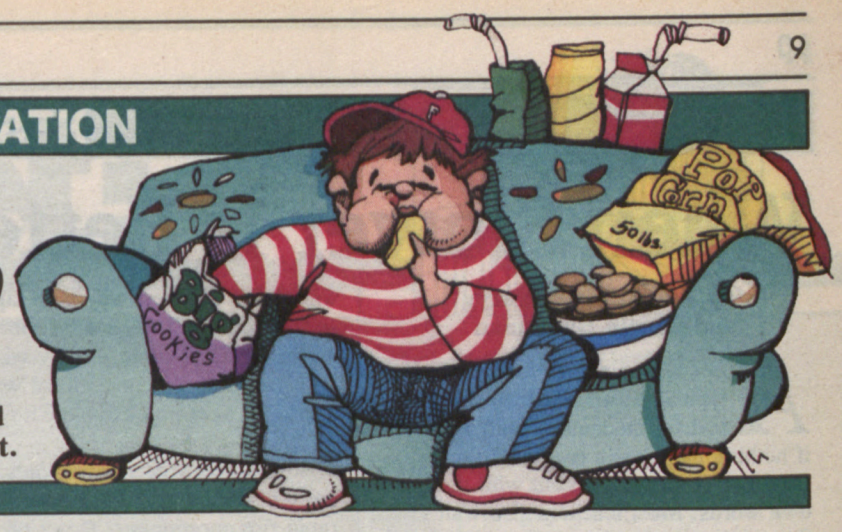
"We try to use everything we get," Baker adds. "We know that when you're dealing with children you can't expect perfection." Indeed, that's what makes the production so realistic: children are themselves on camera.

District administrators have provided basic equipment and released time and have set aside a classroom this year for use as a studio.

The future looks bright. Armed with a $2,500 Hilda Maehling grant from NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, the teachers plan to buy more equipment and study TV production techniques so they can gradually move to a daily broadcast schedule. □

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Say Goodbye to Couch Potatoes!



If you want kids to shape up and get fit, offer them a healthy portion of skills and self-confidence, choices and challenges, say NEA members who are doing just that.

Stagnant and sluggish—at best. That's a generous description of American young people's physical condition during the past decade.

The apparent reason: too many youngsters themselves have been stagnant and sluggish—reclining in front of the TV or VCR, sustaining their stagnation with megadoses of salt, sugar, and grease.

"Many parents are in better shape than their kids," says University of Michigan physical education professor Guy Rieff. Rieff should know: he conducted the 1985 School Population Fitness Survey, which measured students' flexibility, endurance, and overall strength. On average, the study found, girls can't run as fast as girls used to. On average, girls *and* boys are less fit midway through high school than at the end of eighth grade.

Former Washington Redskins coach George Allen, who chairs the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport, blames budget cuts for the decline in fitness. Allen, a Reagan appointee to the Council, wants federal money earmarked for physical education—but considers the prospect unlikely.

The Council recommends daily fitness activities for all children but says only 36 percent of today's youngsters receive daily physical education of any kind.

An emphasis on fitness could change the dismaying statistics—as well as the lives of millions of students to whom P.E. represents Public Embarrassment. These are the youngsters who are the last chosen for every team, who have a knack for making the wrong move at the wrong time in the wrong way, who hide out deep in right field.

For these children, the need for physical fitness skills is as much social as physiological. And because physical fitness correlates with mental alertness, the need is also intellectual—for greater mental agility and psychological resiliency.

An elementary or middle level school with a physical education teacher and adequate scheduling and facilities can offer students these lifetime gifts. But even in schools that lack the services of a physical education teacher (as too many do), there's still a chance. Other staff members who supervise recess or lunchtime activities can step in to make that time count for fitness.

Joe Di Dio

Wichita teacher Bob Marley

What can educators do to help students get fit—and stay that way, for life? NEA physical education teachers offer colleagues a variety of useful ideas.

"A lot of physical education is a matter of self-esteem," says Bob Marley of Pearl Kensler Elementary in Wichita, Kansas. He teaches kindergartners developmental skills and eases older students into lifetime sports.

"First they learn to move, then they use the motions," Marley explains. He warms students up with stretching, hopping, skipping, then goes into skills—ball skills, rope-skipping skills. Next he may add folk dance, for rhythm.

Marley stresses cooperation, not competition. In fact, students don't play games in his class, but simply learn skills and rules. The game, should they choose to play it, waits for recess.

A 28-year teacher, Marley has seen a broad shift in physical education: "When I started, it was mainly sports. And sports meant competition. No longer. At least not here."

Maryland NEA member Marsha Smith agrees. Smith teaches sixth to eighth graders at Redland Middle School in Rockville, in a coed program the U.S. Department of Education has recognized as exemplary.

"Physical education is *not* simply athletics," Smith emphasizes. "It's things students can carry over into their lives outside school, their later lives: it's development, and it's exposure to a range of sports."

In Smith's classes, team captains (who aren't necessarily the athletically talented) choose their teams in private, from a class roster—so nobody else knows which students were the last chosen.

Joe Di Dio

Marsha Smith shows Lorne Volat how to send the ball just where he wants it. Smith's students learn sports to enjoy outside school.

Smith usually has an adaptive class of 10 to 15 very uncoordinated students, who play soccer or football in teams of six or seven so as to involve the girls (and even those usually-forgotten boys who aren't crazy about the game). Each team has to involve a girl as quarterback, running back, or receiver in two out of every four plays. Everybody's eager for the group to succeed, and everyone's skill level rises.

In Carolyn Johnson's P.E. classes at Kincaid Elementary in Cobb County, Ga. every sixth week is a week of Fun Days. Each day of that week, the children can choose from a different assortment of activities and stay with each for as long as they want to.

"That gives me an idea of what they really like to do," says Johnson.

Competitive team sports are said to build character, but Johnson feels the cooperative brand of physical education achieves the same result—and for a broader range of children. Everyone gets a turn at leading one of the squads that make up each class—and at earning pluses for taking responsibility for squad members.

"Since we started having the Fun Days, the children have been more thoughtful of each other, so their relations are smoother and they're better behaved," Johnson observes. "For example, we have talent shows. One very shy little girl turned out to be a first-rate clog dancer. That got her some new respect from the other children. And if a child goofs up, the others don't laugh."

Johnson sets up some unorthodox tutoring: not by skilled students only.

"One little boy wouldn't try jumping rope," she recalls. "A bigger boy wasn't good at it, but he kept on persevering. I got him to take the younger one aside and talk him into trying it."

Peer tutoring, in fact, is bringing out the best efforts of physical education students across the country.

"I'm having trouble getting some people in my group to participate," confessed a seventh grader at J.P. Bonnette Junior High School in Deer Park, Texas.

"Well, Jeff," responded TSTA member Arnold Adair, "*you* didn't participate much until now yourself. Maybe you can figure out what to do about it." Jeff was teaching eight or nine classmates one of half a dozen break-dancing skills in a three-week peer-teaching elective in Adair's course.

Like Marsha Smith, Adair and team teacher Della Chandler have coed classes at the middle school level. They offer the sixth graders a dozen skills and the chance to decide when to take each one. Seventh graders get electives—that's where the break-dancing came in—and eighth graders try new skills or build on what they've already learned.

These four NEA members have found their own innovative ways—and adapted the ideas of others—to show students that they can enjoy developing their physical abilities. Success can be even sweeter than candy, even more exciting than TV.

—Jane Power

Fit To Read

Fitting In, a new monthly newsletter for fifth and sixth graders, emphasizes health, fitness, exercise, and nutrition. It's published by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 1900 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091 (703/476-3400). Price per year (eight monthly issues, 30 copies and teacher's guide), $28.

RESEARCH CLUES

When Slower Is Better

by Robert McNergney and Martin Haberman

After asking a question, teachers typically wait less than one second for students to start a reply; if nothing happens in that brief time, they rush in to fill the void with their own words. Most teachers also wait less than one second before they respond to a student's answer.

"Wait time" is the term researchers use to describe these pauses. When teachers increase their average wait time to three seconds or more, studies show, students tend to improve in their use of language and logic. Attitudes and expectations of both students and teachers are also likely to improve. Why?

The idea of wait time appeals to our common sense. If we're not given time to think, we won't. When we're given pause for reflection, our ideas multiply and, in turn, are clarified and refined.

Yet the speed at which most elementary and secondary teachers ask questions and respond to students' answers is astonishing. There is a rapid-fire quality that may actually prevent any form of thoughtful consideration by students—or by teachers themselves.

Using tapes and other means for recording and plotting classroom talk, education researchers have been able to determine that as wait time increases, several things happen. Students increase the length of their responses. They make more inferences and logical arguments. They propose more experiments and ask more questions. They exchange more ideas with one another.

With longer wait time, there are also fewer failures to respond. More students participate. Unsolicited but appropriate comments increase. Students make more confident responses, rather than trying to guess what's on the teacher's mind. (This is true even among students whose teachers previously described them as nonverbal.) Achievement improves even on questions that require more complex thinking.

The effects of increased wait time on teachers are also pronounced. As wait time lengthens, teachers stay on the topic longer and develop ideas in greater depth. The questions they ask their students decrease in number but improve in quality: they invite elaboration or contrary positions.

Research shows that teachers tend to give more wait time to better students, males, and white students. Making a conscious effort to allow *all* students more time before rushing in with a comment or another question can make a surprising difference in student performance.

How can you learn to lengthen your wait time? The best way is to tape yourself as you teach, then transcribe your own tape. Examining exactly what was said may help you understand why you hurry and how you can slow down. Then try again.

Still not convinced you won't have more discipline problems if you give up rapid-fire questioning? Don't take our word for it—see for yourself! Teachers who increase wait time generally discover they have *fewer* discipline problems.

Research suggests that wait time after a student's response is even more important than wait time after a teacher's question. Again, this finding is supported by experience and intuition: at the moment a student stops talking to a teacher, she or he is vulnerable and eager for approval. Wait time shifts the emphasis from simply getting teacher approval to giving an idea more thought.

Students at all levels and of all abilities seem to benefit from increased wait time, demonstrating more confidence and greater willingness to speculate and elaborate on their comments.

We all want schools to teach more than facts. Society needs thinking graduates who can solve adult problems. Preparing students to be critical thinkers isn't easy—but using wait time is an important step in the right direction.

Robert McNergney is associate professor at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; Martin Haberman is professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
They prepared this column with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association.

Wait . . . There's More!

For detailed information on this research, read "Wait Time: Slowing Down May Be a Way of Speeding Up!" by Mary Budd Rowe in the January-February 1986 *Journal of Teacher Education*. Rowe is a professor of science education at the University of Florida.

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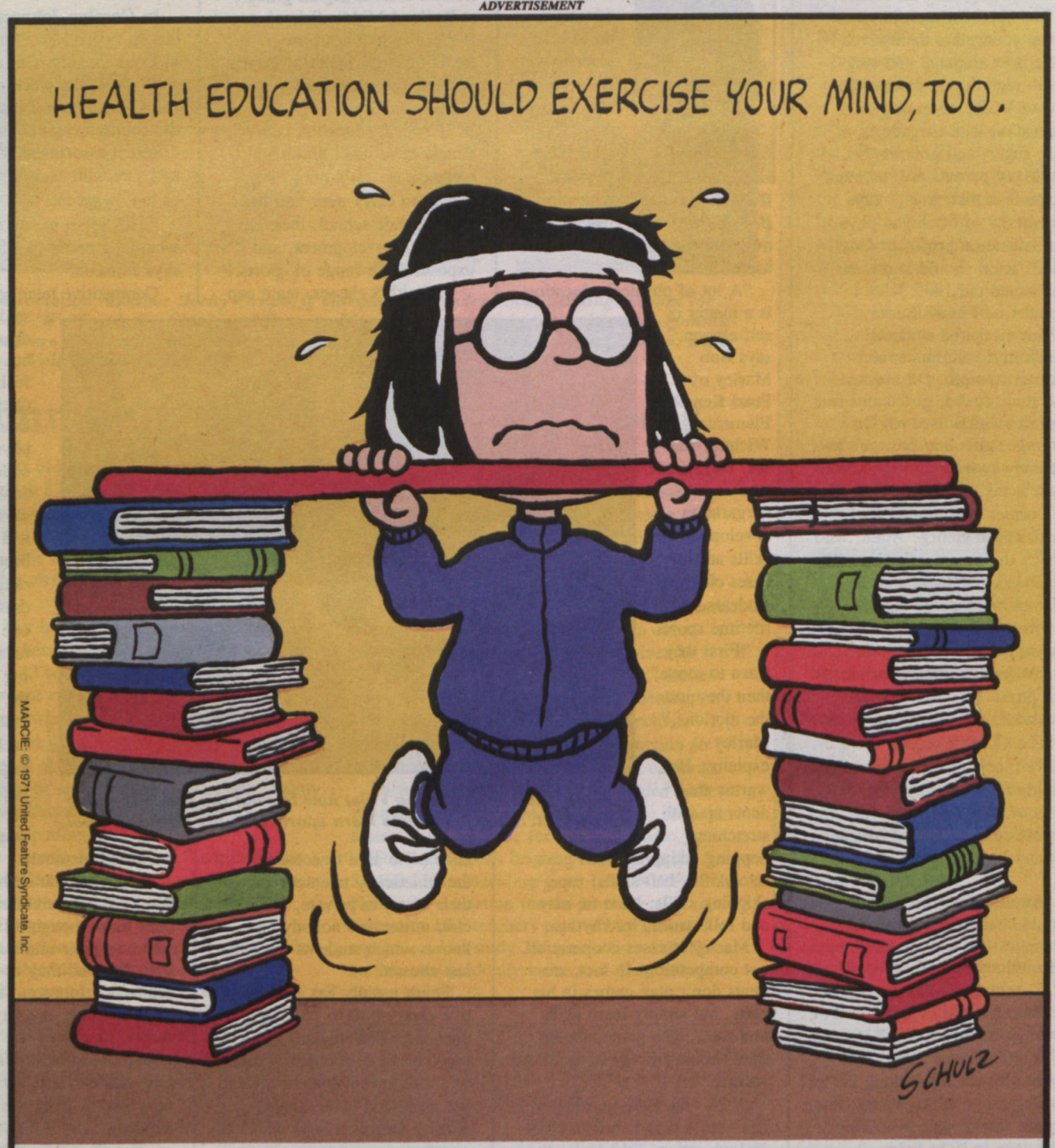

Along with chin-ups, children need to learn good nutrition and other principles of staying healthy. Better health education comes from health-educated teachers.

That's why Metropolitan Life Foundation's "Healthy Me" started a program to enhance teachers' skills. This way, teachers, and kids, turn out healthier.

The Foundation offers cash awards for professional preparation, exemplary health instruction programs and for community groups that actively promote comprehensive health education.

For information, write, "Healthy Me," Health and Safety Education (16UV), One Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10010–3690.

Healthy kids now mean healthy leaders later.

Metropolitan Life Foundation

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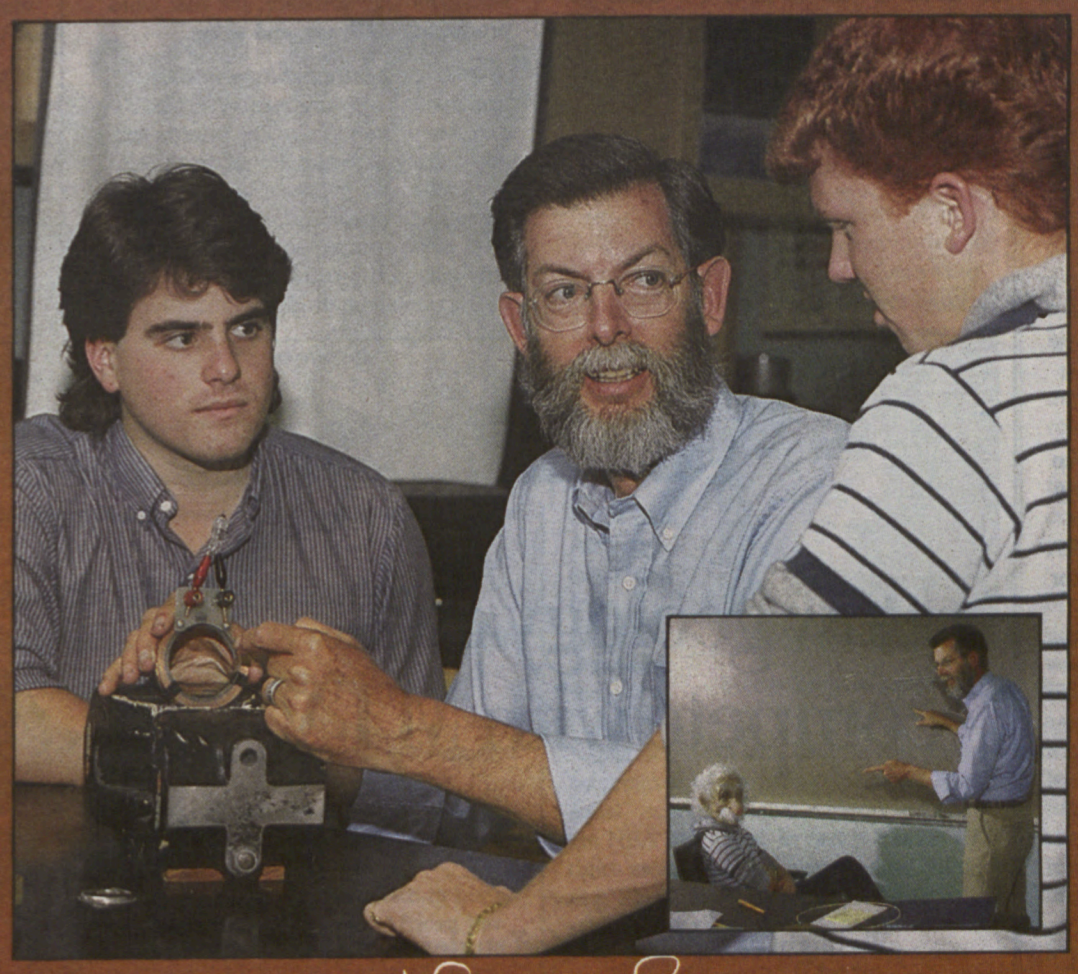

John Dowsing

John McGehee

'Physics Is Life'

Newton's Laws. Orbital mechanics. To NEA member John McGehee, this is the stuff of exciting lessons. Lessons that begin with a challenge and inexorably lead students to an 'aha!' understanding of a physics concept. Lessons laced with humor and outrageous examples—like a trajectory problem involving a Grosseschmelling garbage truck speeding up a 45-degree ramp to try to break the world record for jumping garbage cans.

McGehee has taught physics at Rolling Hills High School in Palos Verdes, Calif., for 18 years. Last fall he received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching. NEA Today *staffer Heidi Steffens travelled to Palos Verdes to talk with McGehee.*

Is high school physics only for students who plan scientific careers?
Absolutely not. Physics is in the kitchen. It's driving a car. One of my former students is a professional dancer. He wrote to me a while back and said he finds himself applying physics principles while dancing. Physics is life.

Do you apply physics to everyday situations in your classroom?
All the time. If we're talking about the forces that charge particles when they enter magnetic fields, I tell my students, "It doesn't matter what you look like—you'd be a lot uglier if the earth's magnetic field didn't deflect the particles from the sun." We'd be mutants!

How do you make seemingly esoteric physics concepts real?
I think, "If I were a student, how would I want this material presented? How can it be organized so it has a logic, a natural flow that makes sense and is related to life?"

I get a lot of pleasure starting with something mundane and sneaking up on the kids. So that by the end of the presentation, they've understood—without realizing it—the concept we're discussing.

One of my favorite things is our annual Physics Day at Magic Mountain, a nearby amusement park. The thrill rides are living physics. They're exciting because they change speed and direction—and you can figure out the acceleration and so on by applying the concepts in high school physics books.

I first took my classes to Magic Mountain about 10 years ago—and it's really caught on. This past March, 4,000 students from 180 schools participated in Physics Day.

The people at Magic Mountain have taken us physics teachers behind the scenes. They've shown us the blueprints, how the rides operate. Each year we make up problems that will help students understand the rides by applying physics principles. The kids love it—it makes physics real.

Do you encourage your students to become teachers?
I always tell them that teaching is the most fantastic job they could have—but that they must also consider the monetary aspect. A young single person—or a married person whose spouse isn't employed—will have a difficult time.

Teachers have equivalent educations to other professionals. We want to live in the same neighborhoods, want similar standards of living for ourselves and our children. But you can't afford that on teacher salaries. It's a real disincentive for people to go into teaching.

How do you manage?
My wife works—she's a substitute teacher. And I work in the summers at TRW. At my request, they've assigned me to laser holography. Using surplus materials the corporation has donated, we're setting up a laser lab here at school.

TRW has also given me time during the summer—paid time—to revise an Advanced Placement physics workbook I wrote. And TRW printed the workbook—at their expense. The book is in the public domain—I give it out to any teacher who's interested.

Why has TRW been so good to you?
I think TRW and other forward-looking science and technology companies are finally realizing that teachers are their bread and butter. We're the ones who get kids excited about science and math.

Wouldn't it be nice if school systems gave teachers time to develop materials?
Absolutely. But I wouldn't want fewer classes or more free periods. That would mean getting to know fewer kids each year, and I'm in teaching because I really enjoy the kids. But I wish that teachers could have a month—paid, of course—at the beginning or end of the school year to work on classroom materials. You can't do it in bits and pieces during the year—there's no continuity.

How do your TRW colleagues react to you as a teacher?
Very positively. Quite a few of the engineers and physicists I've worked with have told me they'd really like to teach—but just can't afford it. They've gotten used to industry salaries.

So you feel money's the key to attracting and keeping good teachers?
In part. The teaching environment is the other part. We've got to start creating an environment in which teachers feel valued and encouraged to grow as professionals, or we're going to lose the best.

I really started thinking about this last year, after receiving the Presidential Award. The awards are a terrific opportunity to give teaching some positive publicity. Just think what it would mean for the President to appear on the news—even briefly—with a group of teachers and talk about how important teaching is to the future of our country.

But it was a missed opportunity?
You bet. All 104 winners and their spouses were flown to Washington. We went to the White House to be greeted by President Reagan—but we only saw him from a distance. We were on the lawn, and he waved to us on the way to his helicopter.

Were you angry?
Not at first. I thought, "OK, the guy's really busy." But a day or two later, my wife and I were flying back to California and they showed news clips on the plane. And there's President Reagan calling the Kansas City Royals and talking to them individually, congratulating them on winning the World Series. Then he invites them to the White House—and meets with them!

That really fried my cookie. With all due respect to the Royals—and I do respect them—all the teachers who were Presidential Award winners worked just as hard and were just as good.

What did you do?
First I should tell you that I voted for Reagan in both 1980 and 1984. It wasn't as if I was looking for insults or a reason to get mad at him. Anyway, I wrote the President a letter. I pointed out how he had inadvertently illustrated our national priorities by finding time to talk and meet with the World Series winners—but no time for the 104 teachers.

This was last October or November. In February, I hadn't gotten any response, so I wrote another letter to the President, saying the same things and also pointing out how much it could mean to education—without spending any federal money—if he used the Presidential Awards to encourage young people to consider teaching as a career.

And I've still never even gotten a postcard or any acknowledgment of my letters.

The Presidential Awards single out top science and math teachers. There's also talk about paying math and science teachers more, to ease the shortage in these two fields. What's your reaction?
I think it's a terrible idea. Take this school. We've got a group of good, capable, hard-working teachers here—in every subject. If somebody came to me and offered me a bonus because I'm a science teacher, I'd tell them to give it to the English teachers. What's more basic than the ability to read, write, and communicate? Or elementary teachers—they provide the foundation on which secondary teachers build.

You can't single out one type of teacher for better pay. All teachers need a living, professional wage. □

TECH TALK

NEA Launches Competition To Recognize Best Software

The initial boom in schools' purchases of computer hardware far outstripped the availability of appropriate software. But that picture is beginning to change, as more and better instructional programs come onto the market.

This fall NEA is launching a new national program to identify the very best educational software available for running on the 2 million computers now in the nation's public schools (10 times more than just four years ago).

"How well the computer lives up to its educational potential depends largely on the quality of instructional software available to teachers and schools," NEA Executive Director Don Cameron noted in announcing the Association's new software awards program.

National competitions will be administered each year by the NEA Educational Computer Service (NEA/ECS), which was established back in 1983 to encourage the development of schoolworthy software.

NEA, Cameron added, will be using the competitions "to help spread the word on the excellent software that's now out there."

The new program has three goals:

► *To pinpoint the very best software in a different subject area each year—as determined by Association members around the country who teach that subject.* Focus for the first year is on algebra software. Future competitions may zero in on the best elementary school reading software, the best high school biology software, the best word processing software, and so on.

► *To recognize publishers whose educational software meets NEA/ECS assessment standards.* The criteria for outstanding software are set forth in a comprehensive printed *Guide to the Assessment of Educational Software*. To meet these criteria, software must be not only technically reliable but also instructionally appropriate and effective. It must motivate real students, in a real classroom, to learn. And the teacher's manual and other documentation accompanying the computer program must be both thorough and readable. A tall order, indeed.

► *To inform buyers of quality educational software.* The publishers of each year's winning software will be awarded the right to use a special NEA certification mark identifying their product as "NEA Teacher-Certified Best Software" for the particular subject.

—Vicky Lytle

Algebra Teachers: You're Up First!

If you're a computer-using algebra teacher, you're invited to nominate your favorite software for this year's "NEA Teacher-Certified Best Algebra Software" award. But you'll need to mail in your nomination to NEA/ECS Algebra, Room 428, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, **no later than Friday, October 17.**

Your card or letter *must* include—

► Title of the software you're nominating.

► Name of its publisher.

► Computer and operating system that will run the software.

► Grade level(s) you've used the software with.

If possible, please also include—

► Publisher's address (at least city and state).

► Publisher's telephone number.

NEA/ECS senior algebra teacher/reviewers will conduct an initial written assessment of nominated software, evaluating it against dozens of instructional and technical standards set forth in the NEA/ECS *Guide to the Assessment of Educational Software.*

Software approved at this point will next be sent to another algebra teacher/reviewer for classroom performance tests with his or her students—followed by a thorough written evaluation.

NEA/ECS will then review all the assessments and recommend the algebra programs to receive NEA's "best" rating for 1986-87. Results will be announced in December.

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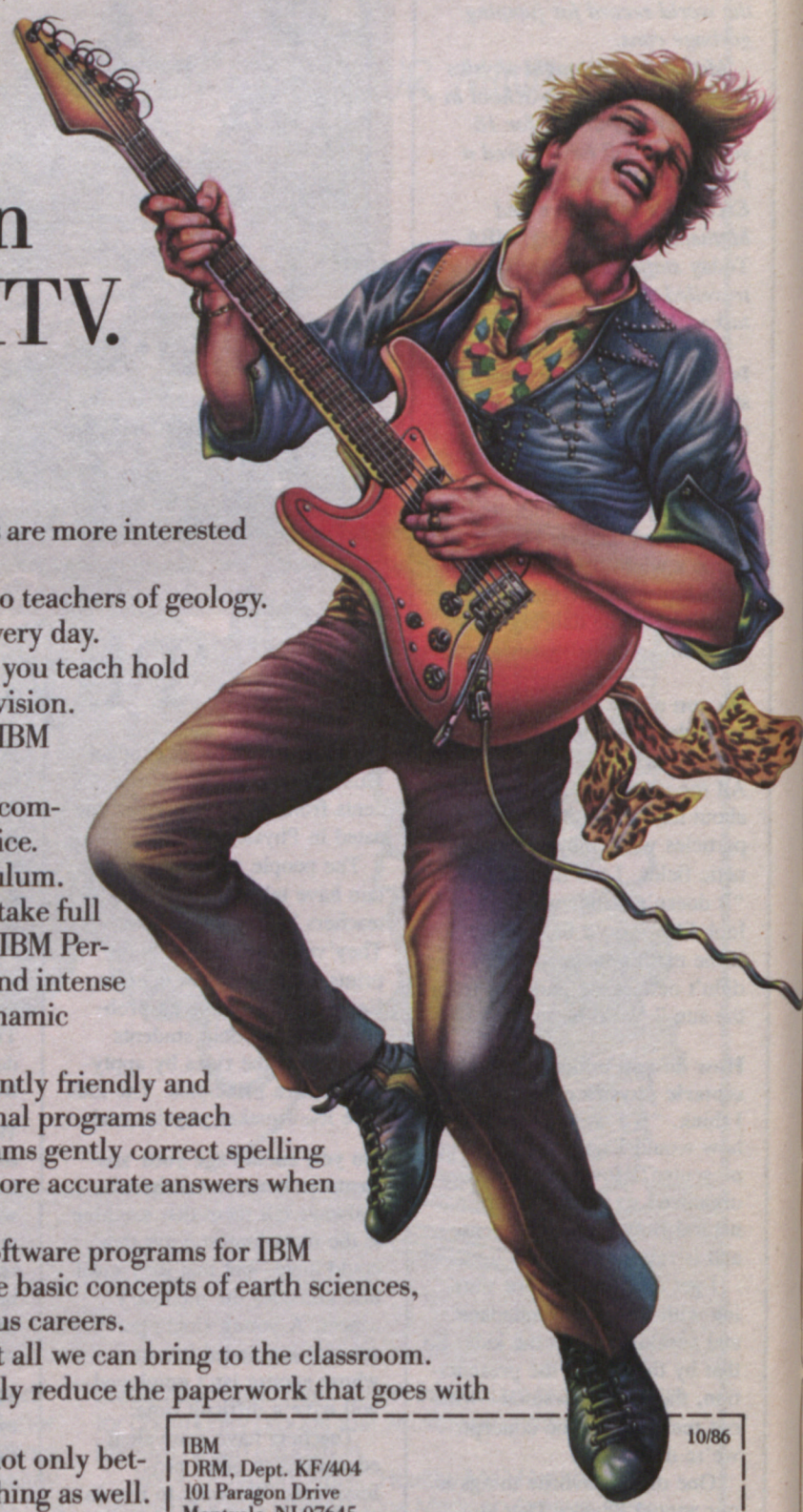
How geology can compete with MTV.



We might as well face it. Most students are more interested in rock than in rocks.

Of course, the problem isn't peculiar to teachers of geology. Almost every educator grapples with it every day.

For the problem is how to make what you teach hold the interest of a generation raised on television.

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Our courseware makes the classroom computer more than a tool for drill and practice. We make it a means for delivering curriculum.

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Which means that IBM can give you not only better teaching tools, but more time for teaching as well.

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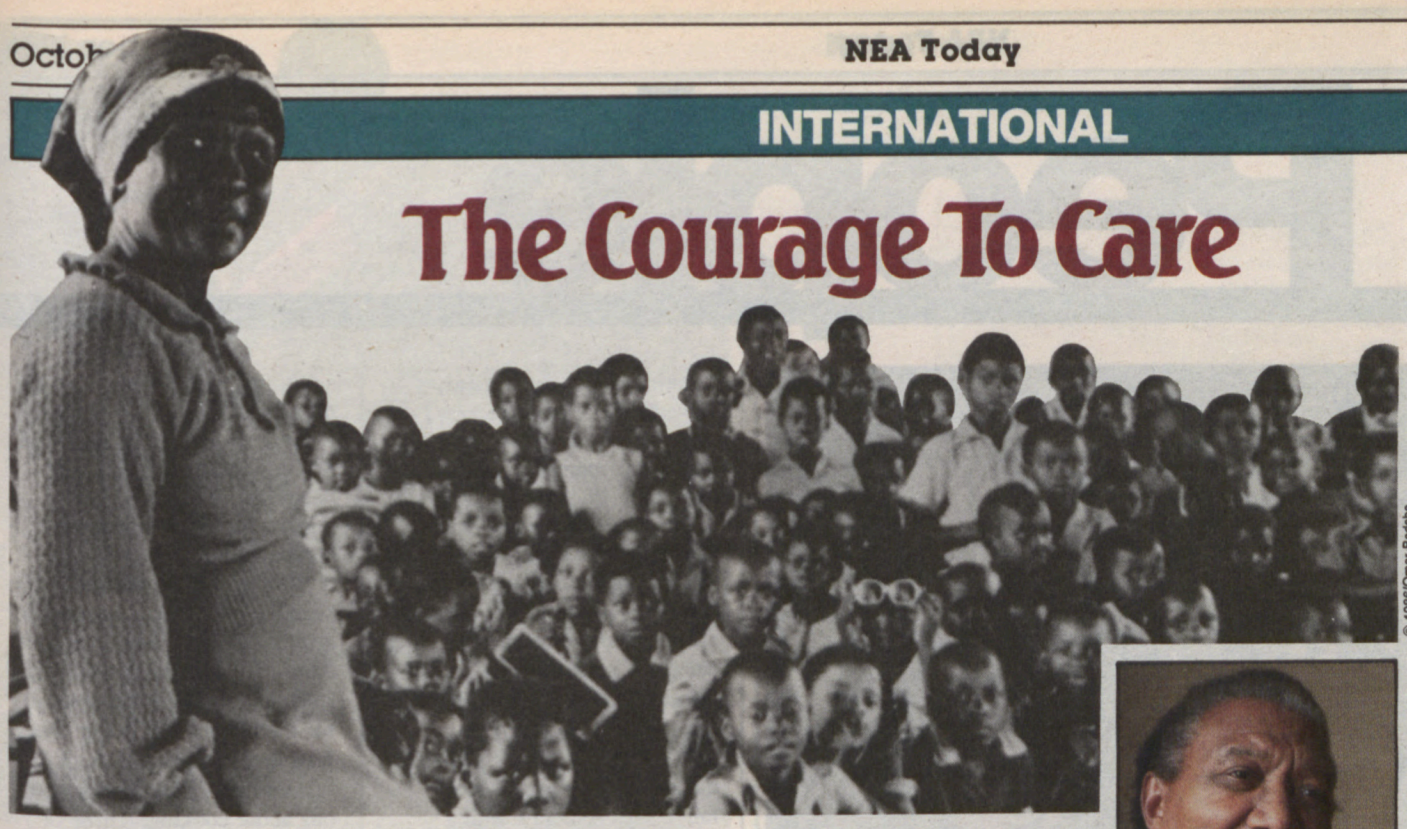
INTERNATIONAL

The Courage To Care



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To the government of South Africa, education of Blacks is a suspicious activity. Students suffer arrest and interrogation—and so do veteran educators.

The stark challenge that faces South Africa's Black teachers: students are plentiful, nothing else is.

Two days before, he'd been a political prisoner. Now—thin, tired, *free*—Hamilton Dlamlenze, executive director of the African Teachers Association of South Africa (ATASA), was addressing a meeting.

His audience: some 600 educators from more than 100 countries who were attending the biennial Assembly of the NEA-backed World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP), held in Canada in early August.

Dlamlenze's story was simple. June 16, 1986, was the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprisings, marking a decade since Black South African young people in mass began demonstrating—and dying—for quality education. For a year, student boycotts and army intrusions had shaken the schools to their foundations. On the anniversary, more demonstrations were expected. During the night of June 15, police came into Dlamlenze's house in Soweto and took him away.

Bryan Schlosser

Newly freed ATASA exec H. H. Dlamlenze

He was never charged, never tried—but he was interrogated, five or six times a day, for more than a week. The police said they wanted to know about demonstration plans and about whether ATASA representatives had met with anyone from the banned African National Congress.

Meanwhile, for 30 days, Dlamlenze's wife went from one police station to another, asking where he was.

The imprisonment wasn't easy for the 65-year-old educator. June and July are the coldest months of the South African winter; Dlamlenze was given cold showers. Although he was allowed to read the Bible, he was too cold to sit still. He paced his cell and did exercises instead. Breakfast was oatmeal, lunch leftover oatmeal, supper bean soup.

Still Dlamlenze was fortunate in his 42-day detention, for South African law permits a series of 90-day detentions without charge. As soon as news of the educator's abduction reached WCOTP, teacher organizations around the world—NEA prominent among them—launched an intensive campaign for his release. He was wanted to attend the Assembly in Canada, the message ran—and if he wasn't there, the teachers of the world would come to get him out, sending a WCOTP delegation to confront the South African government.

No one can say for sure what caused Dlamlenze's release, but the outrage of 9 million of his colleagues must have been difficult for the apartheid regime to ignore.

A month before Dlamlenze's release, on July 4, delegates to NEA's Representative Assembly in Louisville, Ky., had heard firsthand about the position of Black South African teachers from ATASA's president, Randall Peteni.

Bryan Schlosser

South African teacher leader Randall Peteni

The South African government makes no pretense of providing "separate but equal" schools, Peteni's report reminded the NEA delegates. In fact it spends 10 times as much to educate a white child as a Black one. Class size in Black schools can range as high as 70.

In addition, education is compulsory for whites, optional for Blacks. Children in farm areas, as Peteni put it, "go to school at the mercy of the white farmer, that is, when they are not needed for farm work."

In the desolate areas reserved for Blacks, agriculture is impossible, industry nonexistent, and schools widely scattered. Fathers often work full-time in a distant city, returning home maybe once a year. Few children get enough to eat.

Wretched conditions in the rural areas create ever greater population pressure in the Black sections of cities, like Johannesburg's Soweto. A household with four rooms and an outdoor toilet might take in 10 family members who have come from the country.

"A child can't do homework when so many other people are crowded into the room," Peteni noted.

Lack of student motivation adds to teachers' troubles. The prescribed curriculum gives students little reason to overcome obstacles to learning.

"Instead of teaching about the arrival of the white settlers and the victorious white generals," Peteni explained, "we want our children to learn about the Black heroes who continued to fight against terrible odds even after they were defeated." Since last winter a National Education Crisis Committee of Black teachers, parents, and other citizens has been researching a curriculum for such education—and many have been imprisoned for this activity.

"But the young people are very impatient," Peteni reported. "They don't want the old inferior 'Bantu' education—they want education that will help them realize their potential." And, as the world has seen in the past 10 years, many are willing to die to bring it about.

—Jane Power

Videocassette Package Designed for Teachers

Witness to Apartheid, a half-hour videocassette examining the violence and injustice that disrupt the lives of South Africa's young people, is now available. The accompanying teacher's guide was prepared by NEA member Bill Bigelow of Portland, Oregon, whose social studies unit on apartheid was featured in *NEA Today*, March 1986. Teachers can buy the videocassette for $85 plus $5 for shipping—or rent a 16mm film version for the same charge. Proceeds go to the South African Council of Churches Relief Fund for medical and legal aid. To order, send a purchase order or check to Southern Africa Media Center, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415/621-6196.

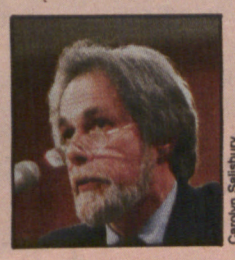
NEA, WCOTP Urge Sanctions Against South Africa

When news of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's refusal to adopt sanctions reached the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) Assembly in Canada in early August, the delegations from British Commonwealth countries came together spontaneously to issue a statement deploring the stand—and to send it not only to Mrs. Thatcher but also to every head of state in the 49-nation Commonwealth.

The entire Assembly adopted a resolution on apartheid and sanctions, submitted by the NEA delegation. It reads, in part:

"Black South African children have become a special target of state repression and violence in the past decade. During the 1985 state of emergency nearly one-third of those detained by the South African government were children under the age of 16. Two thousand students . . . were detained and many held for months before their release. At least 201 children were killed by security forces; 11-year-olds were charged with political offenses and denied bail. Torture in detention is rampant; at a minimum, 15 persons died in police custody or immediately after release. Most of these were younger than 25, including a 13-year-old boy. Aggressive and unwarranted action by police and the South African Defense Forces against children prevails during the present state of emergency. This violence will continue so long as the police and defense forces continue to occupy Black townships and the schools."

The resolution goes on to call for an end to "all trade, commerce, and cultural and other support for the government of South Africa" until that government ends the present repressive measures and prepares for negotiations with "leaders selected by the majority peoples toward the end of establishing a multiracial, democratic government and a free and just society in South Africa."



Carolyn Salisbury

NEA international relations director John De Mars urges Congress to act.

Prior to the WCOTP meeting, NEA had testified before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 24, urging sanctions and detailing the effects of apartheid on Black and other children of color in South Africa.

People

Bob Pennell

Looking for a great meal, served with a lot of pizzazz? Head for southern Oregon, bypass the restaurants, and go straight to Phoenix High School.

Home economics teacher **Leslie Ashcraft** has turned Phoenix on to cooking—and eating—well and with style. At a time when home economics is being cut back in many schools, Phoenix added a second home ec teacher this year.

"Over 150 students signed up for cooking classes this fall," says Ashcraft with a touch of pride. "Out of a student body of 600," she adds.

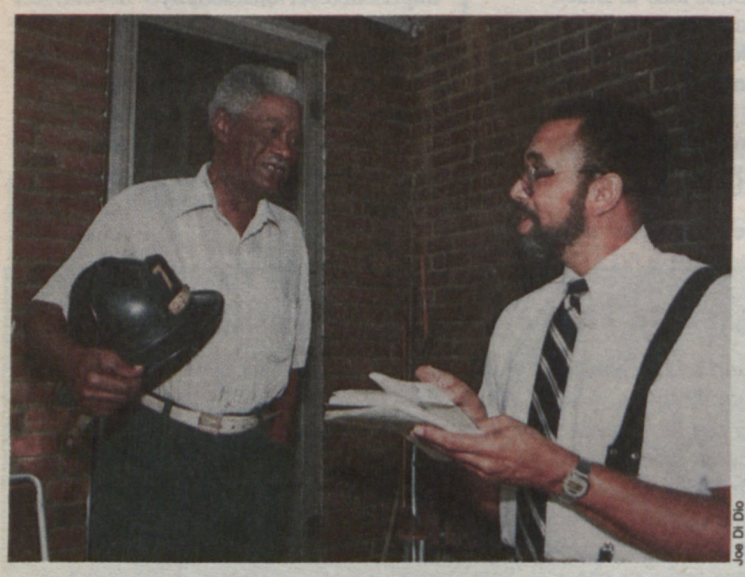
Ashcraft credits the recent popularity of cooking to the visibility her cooking teams have earned through their participation in competitions.

Last school year, Ashcraft's two teams—selected from an in-school competition—took first and second place at the Southern Oregon Home Show and travelled to Portland to prepare food for the Oregon Beef Council at a cooking show—in addition to doing meals and banquets for a number of school, school administration, and community groups.

"Last year was the second year we gave a free banquet for senior citizens," says Ashcraft, "and 150 seniors attended. The students raised all the money for the banquet by doing breakfasts and lunches at school."

Ashcraft's students are serious about cooking. Three of last year's seniors went on to culinary institutes—and six of this year's have already said they want to pursue culinary careers.

"I'm so proud of these kids," she says. "They really work hard, take initiative, and come up with creative ideas. They're going to be successful at whatever they do."



Joe Di Dio

To make Black history come alive for students, nothing beats a personal touch, maintains **Joshua Taylor**. Taylor is a social studies teacher-specialist in Arlington, Va.—a Washington, D.C., suburb that's 9 percent Black.

For Taylor, the personal touch means researching his community's Black history—putting into practice the expertise he's gained moonlighting as a librarian and newspaper reporter.

He tracks down old photos and reproduces them in slide form, takes his own photos of homes, schools, and churches that have sheltered important members of Arlington's past, and interviews and photographs many of today's prominent Black Arlingtonians. (That's George Vollin, oldest living member of Arlington's first all-Black volunteer fire department, with Taylor in the photo above.)

Joe Di Dio

Taylor presents slide shows to his students at Ashlawn Elementary, as well as to various civic and community groups. His students have taken photos and recorded narratives for some of the shows.

"Children should be made aware that they have a Black heritage in their own community," Taylor believes. "And they need to understand the link that heritage has with their own lives."

"We see it on TV.
Though we try to hide our eyes.
Pretending what we see is not really there.
But what about the children who are touched by what we see?
Is this the pain they should learn to share?"

These opening lines, written by a high school student, are from "Children of a Dream," a two-part broadcast video performed by 150 junior and senior high students under the direction of Teutopolis (Ill.) High band director **Craig Lindvahl**.

Focus of "Children of a Dream" is today's music videos. Lindvahl says the students hope their efforts will promote the sale of quality music products and encourage students around the country to speak out for what they believe.

Production of the video began in November 1985 and was completed last May. "What started out as a five- or six-week project has turned into an ongoing activity," Lindvahl says.

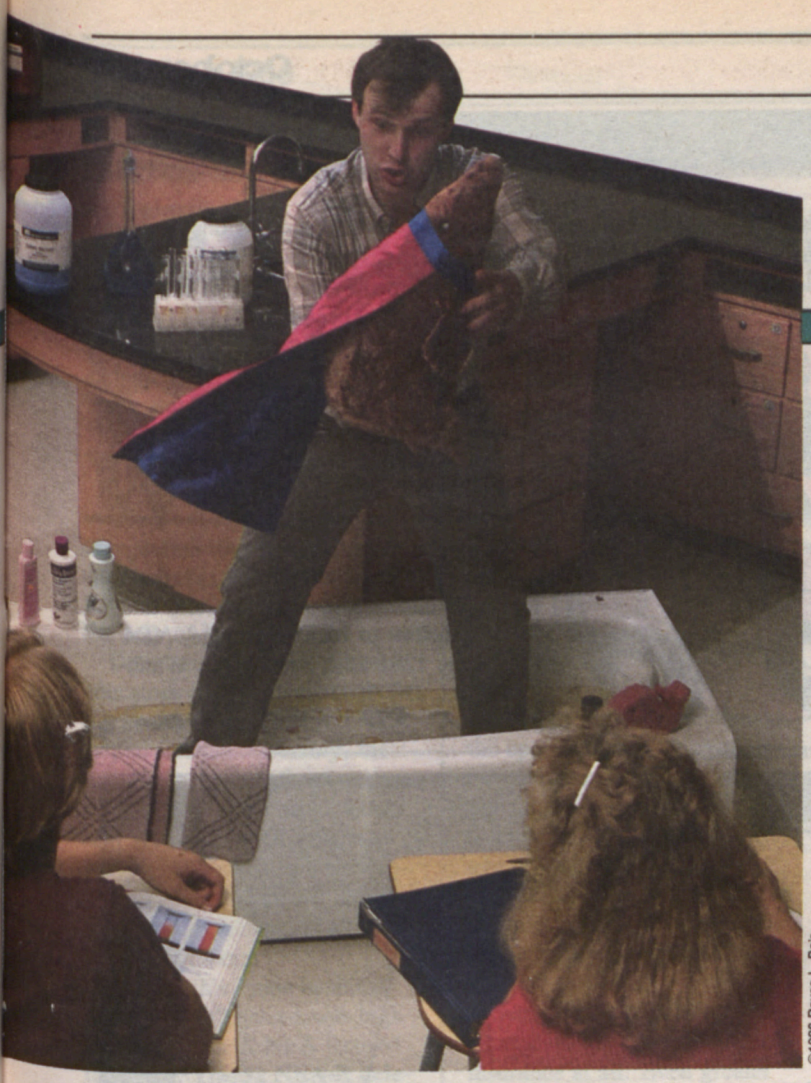
The project has received coverage in local newspapers and the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. The video aired on the Cable News Network, and Lindvahl was interviewed by a Tallahassee TV station. He recently met a man who reported seeing the video in Korea.

And there's been a spinoff. After viewing "Children of a Dream," gifted third and fourth graders in Taylorville, Ill., produced their own video, "Roadrunner's Dream," depicting a better life in their hometown.

The students' teacher is Ann Lindvahl, Craig's mother.

As we go to press, Lindvahl has received word that the Entertainment Industries Council is interested in making "Children of a Dream" part of its music video packet that will be going out to schools across the country. The Council is a nonprofit organization representing the three major TV networks, the movie industry, and recording companies in their joint efforts to aid the nation's war on drugs.

If you'd like a copy of the video, write to Craig Lindvahl at P.O. Box 745, Teutopolis, IL 62467.



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"This is not a mole," Utah teacher **Frank Stevens** warns his chemistry students as he shows them a stuffed animal that obviously is a mole. In fact, this is chemistry taught Monty Python-style—with a British accent (Stevens was born in England and educated at the Universities of Surrey and Oxford) and with silly props (moles of various sizes, a bathtub, zucchinis).

The Davis Education Association member explains his occasional forays into farce: "If you do something unpredictable now and then, the kids might pay attention."

Hence "Mighty Mole," who is on hand for Stevens' lesson on the kind of mole he *is* talking about—the molecular weight of compounds expressed in grams.

A four-year veteran at Davis High School in Kaysville, Stevens forces surplus zucchinis from his garden on students who flunk tests. The bathtub, permanently stationed in his classroom, is the setting for his annual lecture on soluble salts. Which he begins by claiming that his former countrymen bathe less often than Americans because they're afraid they'll dissolve in their "bawth" water.

Not every media student has the opportunity to match wits with the likes of Billy Crystal, David Brenner, or George Carlin—on camera, no less.

But that's exactly the sort of learning by doing that Absecon, N.J., media specialist **Ed Johnson** *(photo, left, with Dom DeLuise)* requires of the juniors and seniors who pass through his year-long classes.

Johnson's four-state search for celebrities pays off when his students travel on-site to conduct televised 10- to 15-minute interviews with the stars (Atlantic City is 10 miles away).

Back in class, the emphasis is on research techniques and television production, as Johnson teaches students to ready the 10-minute daily morning news and 75-minute occasional Replay Magazine for airing schoolwide.

A favorite encounter? "We were all set to interview Dom DeLuise," recalls Johnson, "when he turned the tables and interviewed us instead."

Chris Wendt

"My only requirement for the class project is that it be real," says Moscow (Idaho) High School speech and English teacher **Carole Hughes.** "It's got to get the kids out of the classroom, involved in the world, and speaking to other classes and community groups."

Each year Hughes' speech class selects a project, follows parliamentary procedure in making all decisions about it, and sees it through to completion.

Last year's class decided to create a memorial to the soldiers from their county who died in Vietnam.

The class spoke to Vietnam veterans in the area, contacted the Veterans Administration for the names of those who died, and planned and held an assembly on the war for the entire student body.

They designed and commissioned a granite memorial engraved with the names of the deceased soldiers, then raised the money for it by speaking before other classes and asking for contributions. They also commissioned a painting of an American and a Vietnamese shaking hands—and met with city and county officials to find sites for the memorial and painting.

The painting will hang permanently in the county courthouse. During a Memorial Day ceremony, the memorial and an evergreen tree were dedicated in a city park.

Michael Munden

Chuck and Nancy Brinda enjoy sharing movies, circuses, and plays with their two young daughters, but they could find no single resource that listed all suitable events.

The two Columbus (Ohio) Education Association members decided to fill the information gap themselves—by publishing a newspaper for parents that would contain a family entertainment calendar and lots more.

The Columbus Child made its debut in July 1985. Besides a two-page calendar of events for children and parents, each monthly eight-page issue also contains news and feature articles on such topics as divorce and child care.

The Brindas—Chuck teaches marketing education at Briggs High School in Columbus, Nancy special education at Violet Elementary in nearby Pickerington—patterned their newspaper after a similar publication in another city. They contacted typesetters and printers, subscribed to a specialty news agency on parenting, introduced themselves to potential advertisers, and looked for writers.

Recently they've formed a network with some 30 similar publications in other cities to look into national advertising and other matters of mutual interest.

Chuck credits *The Columbus Child* with making him a more effective teacher: "I can now talk first-hand to my marketing students about the business world."

It started out as a 1970 Camaro—but General Motors wouldn't recognize it, now that **Russ Parkison's** students have made it into a race car.

Parkison, who teaches auto mechanics at Redondo Union High School in Redondo Beach, Calif., raced the car every couple of weeks last spring at the local track. A team of students were his pit crew.

It was the second year Parkison's students had stripped an old car and turned it into a racing machine.

"This car is really a great motivator," he says. "The kids get more interested in theoretical knowledge when they see how it helps build a better race car."

Parkison isn't worried that all the attention to the race car will encourage fast or reckless driving. "The kids understand that fast driving should be done only under controlled conditions and in specially constructed cars," he says. "The highly structured character of the track helps them make the distinction between street driving and racing."

John Dowsing

RESOURCES

Idea Exchange

Paper Tigers

The November elections offer extra learning opportunities for everyone, but for social studies classes most of all. Election time is when geography, political science, journalism, and cultural differences come together for Kurt Shellenberger's sophomore American Studies class and senior American Government class at Conestoga Valley Senior High School in Lancaster, Pa.

Shellenberger asks each student to bring in a newspaper published the day after the election, encouraging them to seek out publications from distant or unusual places. Students collected about 100 different U.S. papers in 1984, he says, plus 10 from other countries.

Shellenberger first puts the papers on display in the classroom for a month, then turns the students loose to compare them in any way they choose: writing style, ads, sports news—even election results or analysis. For some, the chance to read a major metropolitan daily is in itself a learning experience.

Newspaper collecting needn't be limited to social studies, Shellenberger suggests. English teachers might compare journalistic styles, while elementary teachers might use the papers to encourage reading after an event most students are interested in, like the Super Bowl.

What Goes Over Like a Read Balloon?

For three months every year, students at the K-5 Ellen T. Briggs School in Lake Hopatcong, N.J., "read, read, and read some more," reports fourth grade teacher Lorraine Reed. It's all part of the "balloon reading program" she's directed for the past 10 years.

Whenever a student finishes a book, he or she discusses it with a volunteer parent. After every fifth book a student reads, his or her name is written in a color-coded paper balloon in the school entrance hall for everyone to see.

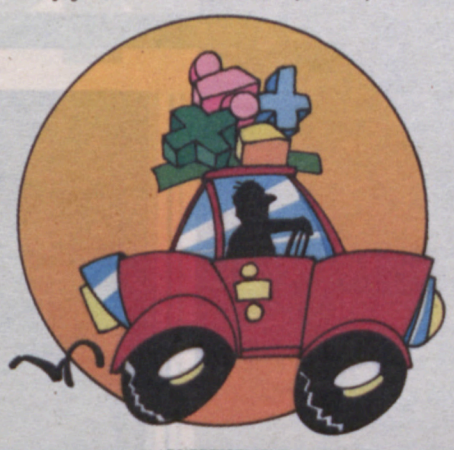
When the three months are over, the PTA gives every child who's read at least 15 books (that's usually more than a third of the student body) a helium-filled balloon with a postcard attached. The card, addressed to the school, lists the student's name, class, school, and number of books read—and invites whoever finds it to mail it back with a note telling where it was found.

The balloons are all released at once from the middle of the playground. Usually the postcards start coming back within two weeks. Students' excitement about reading, Reed hopes, will last a lifetime.

Improving Math Mileage

At George Mason High School in Falls Church, Va., math department cochairs Eileen Backofen and Barbara Ringgold send general math students "on the road" to see how useful math can be in their own lives.

A computer program assigns each student a gas mileage rating for a car and 10 Virginia cities to visit on a 10-day vacation. Students plot the coordinates of each city, plan an itinerary, then keep a daily journal of destination, route, average speed, travel time, gallons of gas used, activities along the route (Backofen provides a stock of brochures), and expenses.



At the end of the "trip," students calculate cost per day and per mile. Thanks to the vicarious vacations, students who wanted nothing to do with math have started finding a lot they can do with it, Backofen reports. □

If you're using a classroom activity that you think other NEA members might like to know about, send a description to Idea Exchange, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

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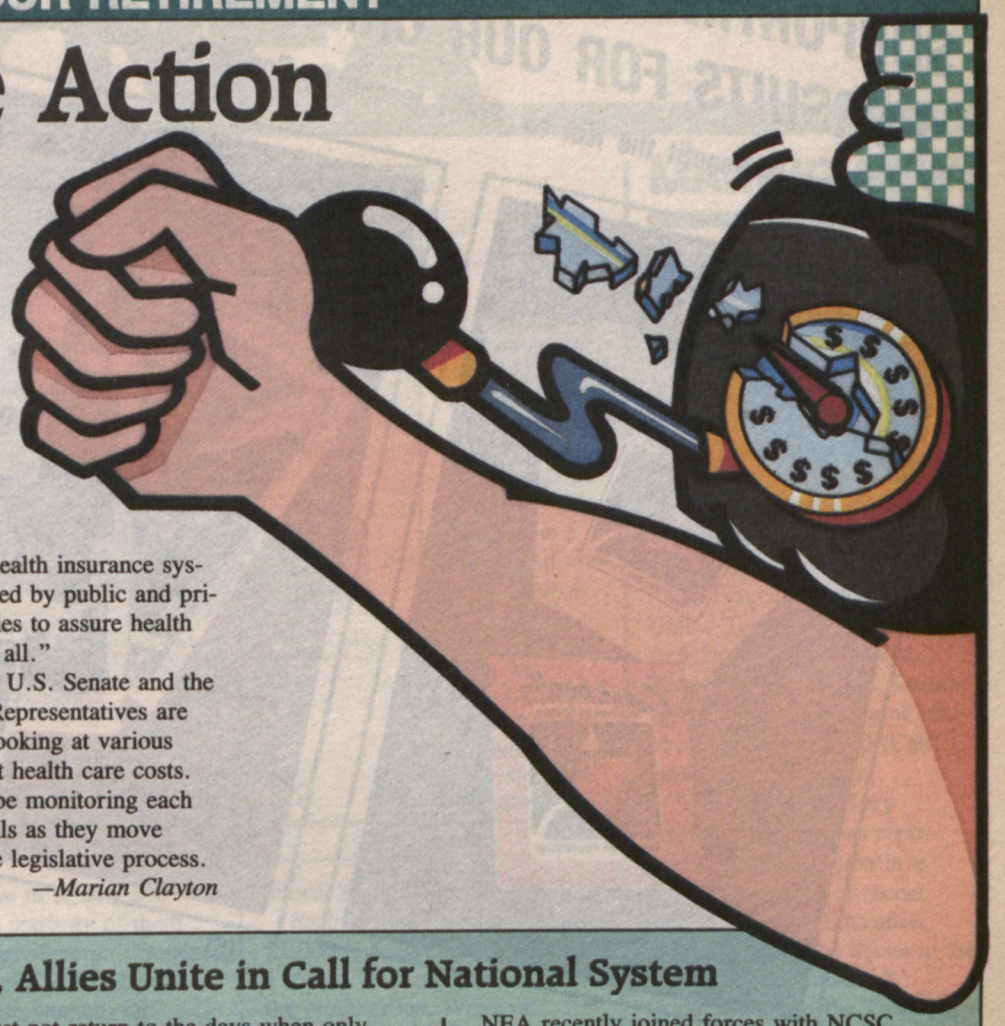
YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

NEA Supports State Action On Health Care



While inflation has slowed in general, health care costs continue to soar. Older Americans are paying more each year for their health care—even with the help of Medicare.

Determined to help retired educators cope with skyrocketing health costs, the 1986 NEA Representative Assembly, meeting this summer in Louisville, Ky., voted to urge state Associations to work with their state retirement systems to provide adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for all retired members.

Getting this "new business item 1986-D" passed was high on the agenda of NEA Retired members. The 52 NEA-R delegates among the 7,538-member Assembly worked to generate support for the proposal within their state delegations.

"In most instances," explains NEA-R President Joe Westbrook of Memphis, Tenn., "when an educator retires he or she loses the health insurance coverage that was provided by the school district."

Westbrook says the new business item is significant because it encourages action at the state level—and because NEA affiliates will be working with state teacher or public employee retirement systems to provide health care coverage for those who have *already* retired, as well as for future retirees.

Meanwhile, a new federal law that took effect July 1, 1986, will allow new retirees the option of continuing their coverage under their employers' group health plans for up to three years—provided they pay the premiums. This law, unfortunately, won't be of help to those retirees who lost their health insurance before July 1.

Some 30 to 40 million Americans now have no health insurance at all. Even greater numbers are *under*insured against catastrophic illness. Too often, they're faced with financial ruin after a long-term illness runs up astronomical medical bills.

"Often people covered by more than one plan are surprised to learn that they aren't insured for long-term care," Westbrook points out.

Since 1978, the NEA Representative Assembly has voted annually to include among the Association's federal legislative priorities "a comprehensive, universal health insurance system provided by public and private agencies to assure health services to all."

Both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives are currently looking at various ways to cut health care costs. NEA will be monitoring each of these bills as they move through the legislative process.

—Marian Clayton

NEA, Allies Unite in Call for National System

"We must not return to the days when only those who could afford to buy retirement insurance could look forward to a dignified old age, when only those who could afford to buy medical care could look forward to good health," NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell told the National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSC) meeting in Miami this past July.

Groups that fight for senior citizens and those that fight for the nation's educators and youth must begin to work together more closely on common goals, Futrell added.

NEA recently joined forces with NCSC and several other national organizations in the National Health Care Campaign—a coalition working to achieve nothing less than all Americans' access to high-quality, affordable health care.

Other groups in the coalition include the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, the Children's Defense Fund, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Gray Panthers, and the National Association of Social Workers. □

What Every Consumer Should Know About Reducing Health Care Costs

Until recently, health care choices were quite limited. If you were ill, you visited a physician who was probably not a specialist, and if your illness warranted it, you were admitted to a hospital.

But today you're faced with a variety of alternatives. The nation's health care system is changing rapidly to respond to advances in medical technology—and to the rising cost of health services, especially inpatient hospitalization.

The new options prompt a number of consumer questions. Here are answers to some of the most common ones.

Wouldn't I be better off being admitted to a hospital if I need surgery?
Not necessarily. The decision to operate no longer automatically means a hospital stay. More and more routine surgery is performed in the doctor's office, an outpatient unit at the hospital, a walk-in surgical center, or a medical clinic.

Outpatient surgery may be appropriate for a number of operations, such as simple hernia repairs, removal of noncancerous cysts, some types of cosmetic surgery, and even cataract removal. If you need routine surgery, ask your doctor whether outpatient surgery is suitable.

When should I get a second opinion?
It makes sense to confirm your doctor's advice with a second surgeon's opinion before undergoing any type of nonemergency surgery. This can greatly reduce the risk of unnecessary surgery. The practice is so well accepted that most insurance companies and Medicare now cover the cost of a second opinion on nonemergency surgery. In fact, there's a growing trend among health insurance plans to reimburse the full charge for nonemergency surgery only if a second opinion was obtained.

What are my rights in the doctor's office?
Your doctor should make clear why you need surgery or medication as treatment for an illness, and the risks or side effects that may result from the treatment.

You should ask about options for treatment of a particular illness and be honest in expressing your concerns. If you aren't satisfied with your relationship with your doctor, choose another.

What are my rights in the hospital?
You are entitled to—

- ► Refuse to see anybody you don't wish to see.
- ► Request that a person of your own gender be present during an examination.
- ► Be transferred to another room if the behavior of someone else in your room disturbs you.
- ► Stipulate that your medical records may be read only by those directly involved with your treatment.
- ► Check your hospital bill, no matter whether it's going to you or your insurance company. You should check all subtotals such as room-and-care fees and services, operating room fees, lab fees, drugs, diagnostic tests, and the like—and point out any discrepancies between what you're being charged for and what you actually received. Billing mistakes do happen.

What are some alternatives to long hospitalization?
After an initial stay in a hospital, some patients who aren't yet well enough to return home may be able to move to a nursing home. Treatment may be continued in what is usually a more personalized environment. It's important, however, to know whether your health insurance covers nursing home care. Virtually all health insurance policies exclude coverage for custodial care, which is nonmedical care such as housekeeping and meal preparation.

For some patients whose illnesses are terminal, a hospice provides an alternative to hospitalization. A hospice setting is more homelike; part of the hospice service is to provide emotional support to patients and their families. Again, find out whether your health insurance covers treatment in a hospice.

Of course, the most comfortable and least costly alternative is home care. Most patients not only prefer recovering at home but actually benefit from the familiar surroundings. But is home care medically advisable—and suitable for *you?* It depends on how quiet your home is, whether there's a private room available, whether there's room to maneuver a wheelchair or walker if needed, and how close bathroom, kitchen, and sleeping facilities are to each other.

In many communities there are services that will provide licensed practical nurses and other home health care. Check with your doctor and your local hospital. Some hospitals operate their own home care programs. Be sure to find out whether your health insurance covers home care services and if so, whether there are any conditions and limitations. □

The suggestions above come from "What Consumers Should Know About Health Care Services and Health Insurance," a brochure published by the Health Insurance Association of America for the National Coalition for Consumer Education. For a free copy, write to Community and Consumer Relations, Health Insurance Association of America, 1850 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006-2284.

SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL PURSUITS FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

Proceeds Benefit the Not for Profit Teacher in Space Education Foundation and the Young Astronaut Program

(A&B)

(C)

(D)

Teacher in Space Education Foundation

The Teacher in Space Education Foundation was created by the 112 Space Ambassadors selected during the NASA Teacher in Space Project. Recognizing that there are thousands of innovative teachers throughout our nation who are looking into the future, the Foundation will support their creativity and assist them in bringing the world's frontier into our classrooms. In America's classrooms lies a great untapped source of boundless energy and limitless creativity... **our Teachers.** The NASA Teacher in Space Project offers the 112 Space Ambassadors unparalleled opportunities for personal and professional growth. This foundation will extend that experience to our colleagues across the nation so that together we can make good things happen in our schools.

PLEASE JOIN US BY SUPPORTING THE TEACHER IN SPACE EDUCATION FOUNDATION... WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE.

The Young Astronaut Program, launched at the White House by President Reagan on October 17, 1984, uses the excitement of the manned and unmanned missions of NASA's Space Program to provide the dramatic focus for the Program's activities. High quality educational material is developed and delivered to participating chapters to encourage students in elementary and junior high schools to study science, mathematics and high technology subjects. The Young Astronaut Program aims to instill a spirit of scientific adventure in our youth to prepare them for the challenges of the future.

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The Teacher in Space T-shirt features the attractive logo which symbolizes our shared desire to touch the future through education and space. It is 50%polyester/50% cotton and is available in all sizes.

(B) TEACHER IN SPACE COOKBOOK
This 180-page personalized cookbook, compiled prior to the Challenger mission, is a great collector's item. It makes a wonderful gift on special occasions for family and friends. Recipes were compiled by the Teacher in Space state nominees, First Lady Nancy Reagan, several astronauts, and others interested in space education.

(C) YOUNG ASTRONAUTS' CHALLENGER COMMEMORATIVE PACKET
This packet contains information about the Challenger and its crew, with three color photographs suitable for framing, a letter from President Reagan and two official decals.

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Your NEA

REACHING OUT

NEA Members Star in TV Spots . . .

This year's new NEA 30-second back-to-school TV messages focus attention on the high school dropout problem, education support personnel, higher education, and the importance of raising the salaries of the men and women who work in education. For the first time one of the messages—on dropouts—is in Spanish.

The three dropout spots show NEA members Leticia Ponce and Frank Wheaton, both of California, working to bring former students back to school. The two spots on compensation portray parents—a construction worker and a judge—voicing concerns about the negative impact of low education salaries.

The new NEA TV spots are airing during news and public affairs programs and will reach some 83 percent of the nation's viewers an average of 4.4 times.

. . . and Cable Broadcast

Association members are also featured in an hour-long WTBS (cable) production that will kick off American Education Week (AEW) on Sunday, Nov. 16, at 5:35 p.m. ET.

The product of a unique partnership between NEA and Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc., the show will bring the 1986 AEW theme, "Schools and Community: United for Excellence," to life through a series of segments that focus on entire communities working together to solve local school problems.

Actress Patty Duke will host the broadcast, which will spotlight a Madison (Wisc.) school-within-a-school, a Fairfax County (Va.) program for mainstreaming the physically handicapped, a St. Petersburg (Fla.) program for the gifted, a Fullerton (Calif.) bilingual program, and a Los Angeles (Calif.) homework hotline and latchkey kids program.

Many NEA local affiliates will be working with their local cable TV operators to create community forums around the broadcast.

After the initial broadcast, the show will air three more times on WTBS and will then be syndicated nationwide.

Support TWA Boycott

The NEA Board of Directors voted this past summer to lend support to a boycott of Trans World Airlines (TWA) as requested by the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants (IFFA).

TWA's 6,000 flight attendants, represented by IFFA, went on strike last March after rejecting a demand by Carl Icahn, chair of TWA's board of directors, that they accept a 22 percent salary cut, longer working hours, and reduced vacations and medical benefits.

Icahn explained he made the demand because flight attendants make too much money for their role in society and because the majority of them "aren't breadwinners." (Some 86 percent of TWA's flight attendants are women. Of those, 60 percent are married, 40 percent have dependent children, 25 percent are over age 40, and 65 percent have vested pension plans.)

Icahn followed up by hiring 3,000 younger, inexperienced workers, willing to work for lower salaries.

Frank Wheaton.
Another NEA member who's doing something about the Dropout Crisis.
Watch the NEA on television this fall. On ABC, NBC and CNN news and public affairs programs.
nea
The Subject Is Excellence.

"I owe a lot to that teacher of mine," says a high school student in one of NEA's fall TV ads. "He knew how I could end up if I dropped out. So he didn't lecture, he didn't argue. He came and got me and took me back to school."

Use Commercial TV As a Learning Tool?

Any K-12 teacher who uses commercial television as a constructive classroom resource is invited to compete for one of three new CBS "Television Worth Teaching" awards.

Each award consists of a $1,000 U.S. savings bond and a trip to Washington, D.C., for the presentation. Winners' schools will receive video production equipment.

The awards will recognize education projects that connect commercial TV to reading, current events, social issues, government studies, and other activities. Any 1986 project is eligible.

For entry forms and more information, contact participating CBS-TV local affiliates or write to Television Worth Teaching, CBS Educational & Community Services, CBS/Broadcast Group, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019. Entries must be postmarked by December 31. □

MAKING NEWS

NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education has awarded the first eight **"Operation Rescue"** grants to fund dropout prevention efforts. Winners: Ann Arbor (Mich.) Education Association, Cambridge (Mass.) Teachers Association, Boise (Idaho) Education Association, Glendale (Ariz.) High School Classroom Teachers Association, United Teachers of Los Angeles, La Crosse (Wisc.) Education Association, Gainesville (Ga.) Association of Educators, and Woodland (Calif.) Education Association. . .

NEA President **Mary Hatwood Futrell** has represented the Association in a variety of forums in recent weeks, from the Education Commission of the States to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession to the San Francisco Commonwealth Club. . . .

Meanwhile Vice-President **Keith Geiger** attended a conference of the Triangle Coalition, representing science, industry, and education. NEA is a member of the prestigious Coalition. Geiger reaffirmed the Association's commitment to support the group's aims: quality education in science and technology for all students. . .

NEA membership has reached an all-time high of 1,804,800. NEA affiliates are now the bargaining agent for teachers in 70 of the nation's 100 largest cities. □

TAKING A STAND

NEA Directors Go On Record

Under NEA Board of Directors policy, NEA must publish every roll-call vote of the Board. There was one such vote at the May 2-3 Board meeting and one at the July 2 meeting.

#1: *May 3, 1986* — Authorized a matching grant of up to $250,000 to the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) from contingency funds, and/or other budget categories, to assist in fighting the statewide initiative calling for a cap on the growth in state tax revenues. 120 yes, 4 no, 4 absent, 2 vacancies, 3 nonrespondents (1 other absentee replaced by alternate).

#2: *July 2, 1986* — Approved the proposed NEA program budget for fiscal year 1986-87 as printed and recommended its adoption by the Representative Assembly. 127 yes, 0 no, 1 absent, 5 nonrespondents (2 other absentees replaced by alternates).

Key:
Y—voted in favor of the issue
N—voted in opposition to the issue
O—absent from the meeting
NR—vote not recorded on the issue
V—vacancy
*—alternate director

NAME	STATE	Roll Call # 1	2
Harris	Ala.	Y	Y
McDanal	Ala.	O	O
McDonald	Ala.	N	Y
Stitham	Alaska	Y	Y
Federoff	Ariz.	Y	Y
Kindler	Ariz.	Y	Y
Pondexter	Ark.	Y	Y
**Gooden	Calif.	NR	Y
Johnson	Calif.	Y	Y
Nuesseler	Calif.	Y	Y
Potter	Calif.	Y	Y
Reising	Calif.	Y	Y
Rockwell	Calif.	Y	Y
Walden	Calif.	Y	Y
Williams	Calif.	Y	Y
Wittman	Calif.	Y	Y
Morris	Colo.	Y	Y
Wright	Colo.	Y	Y
Gagliardi	Conn.	Y	Y
Jacaruso	Conn.	Y	Y
Smith	Del.	Y	Y
Zachariah	D.C.	Y	Y
Gordon	Fla.	Y	Y
Holmes	Fla.	Y	Y
Aikens	Ga.	Y	Y
Eller	Ga.	Y	Y
**Lum	Hawaii	Y	NR
Hovey	Idaho	Y	Y
Johan	Ill.	Y	NR
Price	Ill.	Y	Y
Smith, J.	Ill.	Y	NR
Smith, M.	Ill.	Y	Y
Hogan	Ind.	Y	Y
Miller	Ind.	Y	Y
Gilchrist	Iowa	Y	Y
Mesicek	Iowa	Y	Y
Cole	Kansas	Y	Y
Gunter	Kansas	Y	Y
Carrico	Ky.	NR	Y
Morton	Ky.	Y	Y
Falcon	La.	N	Y
Green	La.	Y	Y
McGary	Maine	Y	Y
Jablinske	Md.	Y	Y
Kuker-Kihl	Md.	Y	Y
Cannon	Mass.	-	Y
LaPlante	Mass.	Y	Y
Matulaitis	Mass.	Y	Y
Todd	Mass.	Y	Y
Vacancy	Mass.	V	-
Brown	Mich.	Y	Y
Davenport	Mich.	Y	Y
Eckloff	Mich.	Y	Y
Swanson	Mich.	Y	Y
Zook	Mich.	Y	Y
Lindstrom	Minn.	Y	Y
Tigner	Minn.	Y	Y
Armstrong	Miss.	Y	Y
Jung	Mo.	Y	Y
Myers	Mont.	Y	Y
Rea	Nebr.	Y	Y
Anderson	Nev.	Y	Y
Mitchell	N.H.	Y	Y
Goldman	N.J.	Y	NR
Johnson	N.J.	Y	Y
Moore	N.J.	Y	Y
Peters	N.J.	Y	Y
Prouty	N.J.	Y	Y
Walters	N.J.	Y	Y
Eachus	N. Mex.	Y	Y
Anderson	N.Y.	O	Y
Cleveland	N.Y.	Y	Y
*Ruth	N.Y.	Y	-
Banks	N.C.	N	NR
Cummings	N.C.	Y	Y
Graves	N.C.	Y	Y
Gallagher	N. Dak.	Y	Y
Augusta	Ohio	O	Y
Dolgosh	Ohio	Y	Y
Dorsey	Ohio	Y	Y
Jones	Ohio	O	Y
VanGundy	Ohio	Y	Y
Black	Okla.	Y	Y
Jewell	Okla.	Y	Y
Cornell	Oreg.	Y	Y
Lee	Oreg.	Y	Y
Bentz	OV	Y	Y
D'Eramo	Pa.	Y	Y
Epting	Pa.	Y	Y
Huntley	Pa.	Y	Y
Mechlowitz	Pa.	Y	Y
Mitchell	Pa.	Y	Y
Cortes	P.R.	-	Y
Lebron	P.R.	Y	Y
Vacancy	P.R.	V	-
Blanda	R.I.	Y	Y
Watson	S.C.	Y	Y
Dangel	S. Dak.	Y	Y
Cage	Tenn.	Y	Y
Wallace	Tenn.	N	Y
Hughes	Texas	Y	Y
Jennings	Texas	Y	Y
Scott	Texas	Y	Y
Stacey	Texas	Y	Y
Taylor	Utah	Y	Y
Scott	Vt.	Y	Y
Gant	Va.	Y	Y
Mika	Va.	Y	Y
Wilson	Va.	Y	Y
Amos	Wash.	Y	Y
Horne	Wash.	Y	Y
Miller	Wash.	Y	Y
Johnson	W. Va.	NR	Y
Carlin	Wisc.	Y	Y
Johnson	Wisc.	Y	Y
Schleife	Wisc.	Y	Y
Pershin	Wyo.	Y	O
*Schwindt	Wyo.	-	Y
Cook	Student	Y	Y
*Esbaum	Student	-	Y
Harrison	Student	Y	O
Santora	Retired	Y	Y
Stockman	Retired	Y	Y
Westbrook	Retired	Y	Y
Booth	At Large	Y	Y
Marrone	At Large	Y	Y
McDougle	At Large	Y	Y
Renshaw	At Large	O	Y
Treibley	At Large	Y	Y
Chase	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Foglia	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Lewis	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Mack	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Obermeyer	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Wilson	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Bradshaw	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Geiger	Ex. Com.	Y	Y
Futrell	Ex. Com.	Y	Y

** *Roger A. Gooden* (Calif.) was not present for vote #1 but requested his affirmative position recorded. *Loretta L. Lum* (Hawaii) was not present for vote #2 but requested her affirmative position recorded.

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With either kind of grading, you can enter up to 99 grades per student and up to 99 students per class for the automatic *Class Average* program.

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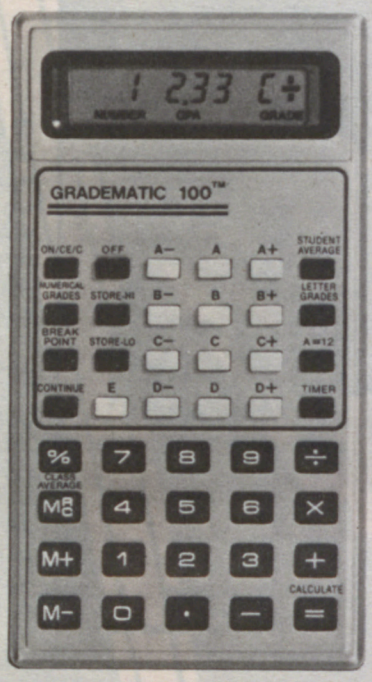
Best of all, the GradeMatic comes complete with *easy-to-follow instructions, full 1-Year Warranty, replaceable batteries (avg. life over 2 years!), and sturdy vinyl carrying case.*



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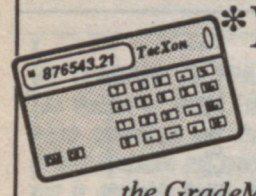

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RESOURCES

TV/Radio Tips

"3-2-1 Contact"—*PBS, ongoing series returns Monday, Sept. 15; check local listings for future dates and times.* Daily one-hour program that helps children understand science and technology.

The West of the Imagination—*PBS, begins Monday, Sept. 22; check local listings for future dates and times.* Six-part series about the American West, including episodes on Western art and photography, the West in show business, Manifest Destiny, and cowboy folklore.

Howard Hesseman (standing, third from right) stars as substitute teacher Charlie Moore in new NEA-recommended ABC-TV comedy series "Head of the Class."

Warner Bros. Television

Head of the Class—*ABC-TV, Wednesdays beginning Sept. 24, 8:30-9 p.m. ET.* New comedy series about a substitute high school teacher who is revitalized by his high-IQ students.

The Triumph of the West—*A&E Network, Wednesdays beginning Sept. 24, 9-10 p.m. ET.* 13-part series looks at the emergence of Western civilization. Free study guide available from the Arts and Entertainment Network, 555 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017.

Double Dare—*Nickelodeon channel, debuts in early Oct.; check local listings for dates and times.* Game show series in which two teams of children compete in a quiz that allows them to win extra points by performing outrageous stunts.

My Dissident Mom—*CBS-TV "Schoolbreak Special," Tuesday, Oct. 21, 4:30-5:30 p.m. ET.* Family turmoil results when a wife protests her husband's business involvement with a nuclear weapons manufacturer. Free study guide available from CBS-TV, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10017.

Main Street—*NBC-TV, Tuesday, Oct. 28, 4-5 p.m. ET.* Children's monthly news program; an NEA award-winner.

The Making of Liberty—*PBS, Tuesday, Oct. 28, 8-9 p.m. ET.* A celebration of the real birthday of the Statue of Liberty, examining techniques used by the Statue's original sculptors.

The Teller and the Tale: A Halloween Special—*Syndicated, Friday, Oct. 31; check local listings for times.* Storyteller Jackie Torrence and Sally Struthers co-host an evening of hair-raising stories. (Rebroadcast of an NEA award-winner).

USA Kids Club—*USA Network; check local listings for dates and times.* Daily one-minute informational program for children, which encourages members of its audience to write letters and share ideas with other viewers.

A Private Space: The Personal Diaries of Women—*National Public Radio, beginning in late October; check local listings for dates and times.* Dramatic readings provide vivid pictures of the roles played by prominent women from 1879 to the present. □

MISSING CHILDREN

The kids pictured here have disappeared from their homes. They've been reported to NEA by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a nonprofit organization funded through the U.S. Department of Justice.

If you think you've seen any of these youngsters in your school or elsewhere, please contact the Center immediately at **800/843-5678.**

Sherry Marler
Born: 8/16/71.
Last seen: 6/6/84 in Greenville, Alabama.
5'4", 120 lbs., brown eyes, brown hair.

Kelly Holland, Jr.
Born: 11/17/75.
Last seen: 2/13/82 in Pinetree Hollow, Larkslane, Kentucky.
4', 60 lbs., blue eyes, brown hair.

Elizabeth Burkhammer
Born: 12/23/70.
Last seen: 9/15/84 in Marietta, Ohio.
5'4", 90 lbs., blue eyes, blonde hair, scar on upper lip.

BOOK BEAT

High Schools Are Forever...

In 1944, an education leader remarked that the American high school should be "the last little citadel"—by which he meant the last shot most Americans would have at developing taste and intellect.

Now, in the third report* from the study of high schools cosponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools, Robert Hampel describes how the high school of the 1940s, itself no citadel, has become today's mass institution that offers something for everyone—but not necessarily anything that elevates taste or expands intellect.

Hampel, who teaches history of education at the University of Delaware,

THE LAST LITTLE CITADEL: AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS SINCE 1940

by Robert L. Hampel

(Houghton Mifflin. 209 pp. $15.95.)

pulls together the variety of social forces responsible for almost 50 years of change—most of it during 1965-75.

After the 1960s, he contends, "the texture of schooling . . . softened and mellowed." In a reversal of roles, students began to act, if not like adults, then like supersophisticated children. And adults, including teachers, began to act more like adolescents.

One byproduct of these developments is the relaxed high school of today—more open-minded than its predecessors, but criticized for its alleged emphasis on "good feelings" at the expense of academics. But as Hampel explains, the smorgasbord curriculum it offers satisfies a lot of people, so change will probably continue to be slow and uneven.

Reviewed by Jerome McGovern, English teacher, Peru (N.Y.) Senior High School; president, Peru Association of Teachers.

...And So Are Books About Them

The primary thesis of *Selling Students Short* is that American high schools' attempts to educate all young people unintentionally foster low standards for student achievement.

Drawing on scores of studies, the authors—who are education researchers—identify the factors that contribute to what they call a majority of high school students' disengagement from academic learning. One factor is the high school diploma's loss of credibility (everyone has it). Another is the competition—from jobs and extracurricular activities—for students' interest.

Teachers, too, help students disengage. In comprehensive high schools, not all teachers can demand serious content learning of all students. So, the authors assert, teachers try to develop harmonious relationships with their students by entering into tacit "bargains" that result in lowered academic achievement.

Teachers may wince, but they'll recognize some typical bargains: delay of a scheduled test, lesser demands on working students, engagement in pleasant conversation about students' lives rather than pursuit of academic work. Reforms have little effect on student achievement, the book argues, because they fail to address education's pivotal relationship—the one between teacher and students in the classroom. In fact, many would-be reforms—more graduation requirements, for example—have contributed to further student alienation.

The authors' implicit message is that changes in the extrinsic and intrinsic reward structure for teachers—higher salaries and the possibility of satisfying involvement with content—are the reforms most likely to result in real increases in student learning.

SELLING STUDENTS SHORT: CLASSROOM BARGAINS AND ACADEMIC REFORM IN THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

By Michael W. Sedlak, Christopher W. Wheeler, Diana C. Pullin, and Philip A. Cusick

(Teachers College Press. 215 pp. $28.95; paperback, $14.95.)

Reviewed by Karen Dunlop, French teacher at Hammond High School, Columbia, Md., and member of the Howard County Education Association.

* The first two books were *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*, by Theodore R. Sizer, and *The Shopping Mall High School: Winners and Losers in the Educational Marketplace*, by Arthur G. Powell and others.

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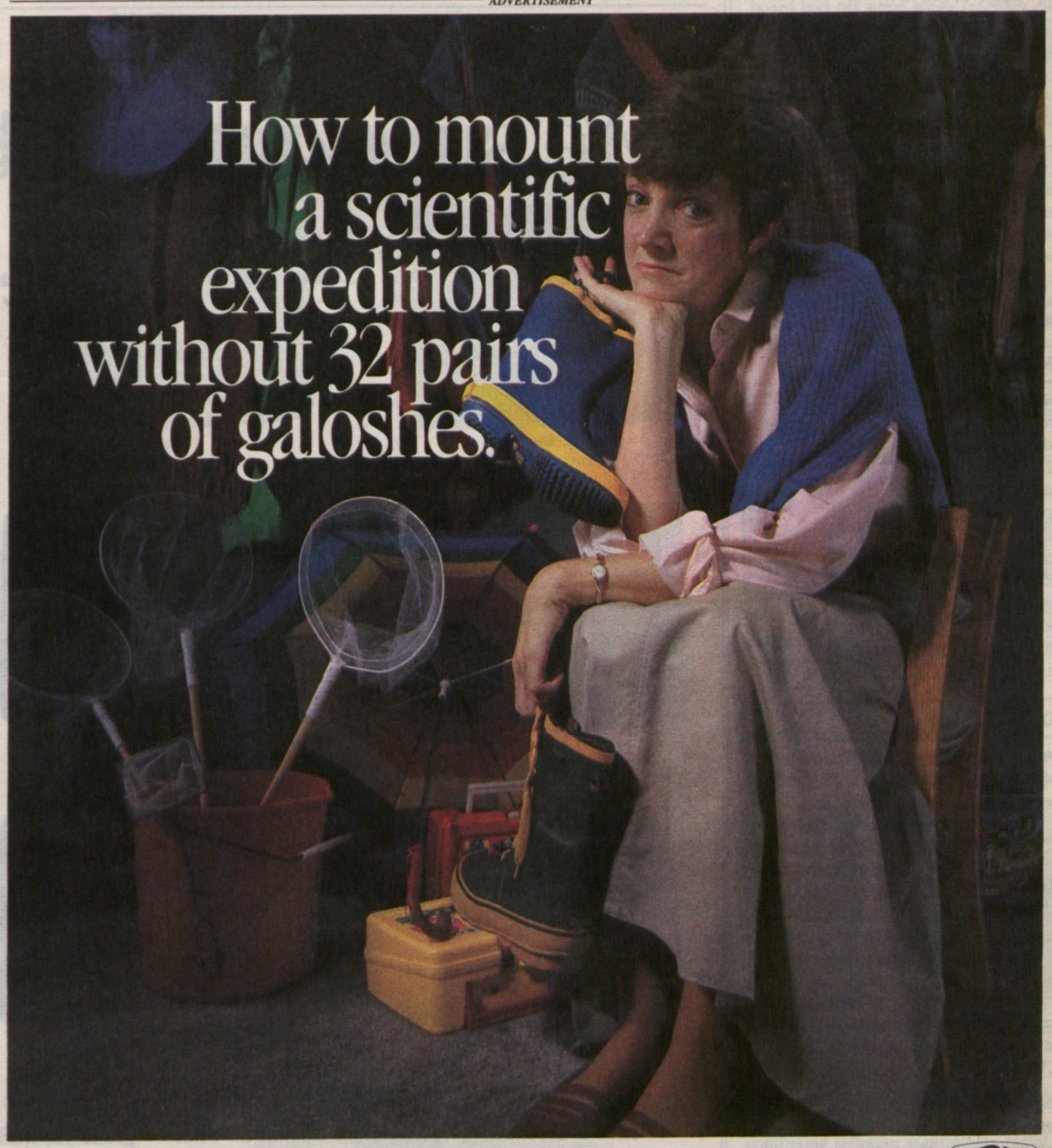

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RESOURCES

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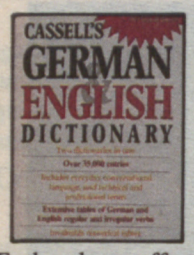
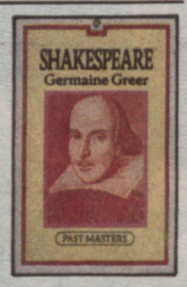
FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Whose House Is This? ¿ De Quién es Esta Casa? Tom and Lee Gardner. Describes assorted animal—and human—dwellings in simple English and Spanish. 28 pp. K-2. $2.50, plus $1.50 postage, prepaid. 15 copies or more, 10 percent discount. (In California add 6 percent sales tax.) La Estancia Press, P.O. Box 387, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.



Cassell's Spanish and English Dictionary; Cassell's French and English Dictionary; Cassell's German and English Dictionary. Each volume offers dictionaries and verb lists in both languages. Respectively 464 pp., 672 pp., 560 pp. $3.95 each. At bookstores or by telephone order from Collier/Macmillan toll-free at 800/257-5755.

ENGLISH



Shakespeare. Germaine Greer. The author, probably better known for her writings on feminism, discusses aspects of Shakespeare's plays, such as their poetics, politics, and sociology. 136 pp. Paperback, $3.95. At bookstores or by mail from Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Looking at History: A Review of Major U.S. History Textbooks. O. L. Davis, Jr., and others. Reviews the 31 most often used junior and senior high school U.S. history books for their fidelity to historical research and their appropriateness for students. 198 pp. $8.95 prepaid. People for the American Way, 1424 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Congressional Districts of the 99th Congress of the United States. U.S. Census Bureau. 35" x 47" wall map shows boundaries of all 435 congressional districts (based on 1980 census data). Provides a graphic depiction of equal representation—and a useful classroom tool for discussing the November elections. $3.50. Specify GE-50 No. 81; S/N 003-024-06075-2. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

HUMANITIES

National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Education Programs. Describes the division's activities, including Humanities Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools—a program of grants to schools, school districts, libraries, and museums (individually or in collaboration) to improve instruction through teacher and administrator training. 36 pp. Free. National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Education Programs, Room 302, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20506.

GUIDANCE/FAMILY LIVING

"I Hear You." Thomas Gordon. The author of *Parent Effectiveness Training* describes, in simple language, alternatives to verbal and physical punishment for parents to use in child-rearing. 15 pp. $2. Ask about quantity prices. National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 950, Chicago, IL 60604-4357.

SCIENCE

Crusade of the Credulous: A Collection of Articles About Contemporary Creationism and the Effects of that Movement on Public Education. William J. Bennetta. Six articles by a noted science editor, including one evaluating the treatment of evolution in seven life science texts initially rejected for adoption in California. 36 pp. $2 postpaid. Publications Office, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118.

INSTRUCTION

Teach-Practice-Apply: The TPA Instruction Model, K-8. Judy Reinhartz and David Van Cleaf. Describes teaching strategies that research has linked to student success. 112 pp. Stock no. 1830-3-00-D. $8.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516. □

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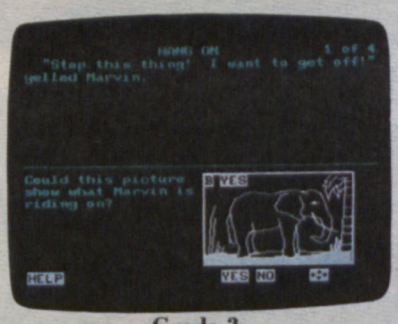

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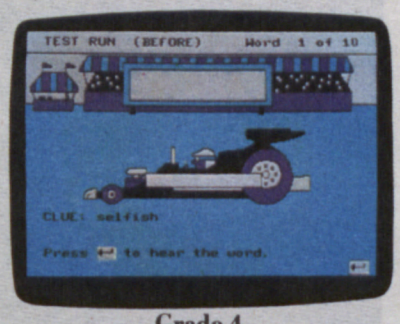

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YOU AND THE LAW

High Court Gives High Sign To Affirmative Action Plans

In three recent decisions, the U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that it's perfectly legal in certain circumstances for school boards to implement hiring, promotion, and layoff policies designed to ensure fully integrated school faculties.

But in order to pass constitutional muster, the court held, such affirmative action plans must be designed to remedy past discrimination.

NEA policy (Resolution E-21) has long supported affirmative action plans as a remedy for past discrimination and urged local affiliates to negotiate them.

The Reagan Administration had contended that affirmative action plans are lawful *only* if the specific individuals to whom they grant preferences can prove that they themselves have been discriminated against in the past by the employer. Significantly, the Supreme Court rejected this argument, ruling instead that an affirmative action plan can lawfully benefit minority teachers even though they were not the "identifiable victims of discrimination."

The most important of the three cases decided by the Court, *Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education*, involved an affirmative action plan negotiated by the Jackson (Mich.) Education Association and its local school board. The other cases involved Cleveland firefighters and New York sheetmetal workers.

The Jackson plan was agreed to because there was evidence that the school board had discriminated against Blacks in the past, resulting in a significant underrepresentation of minority teachers.

Under the affirmative action layoff plan, which sought to maintain a racial balance among teachers, the Jackson board laid off some white teachers during an economic crisis in 1981, while retaining less senior minority teachers. Some of those laid off sued, questioning the constitutionality of the plan.

The Supreme Court's ruling on this case stated, for the first time ever, that specific racial goals are constitutional as a method of correcting formerly biased hiring policies. But it struck down Jackson's particular layoff plan as impermissible, because the percentage of minority teachers retained was tied to the percentage of minority *students* in the district, rather than to the percentage of minority *teachers* in the relevant labor pool.

Together, the Jackson case and the Court's decisions in the other two recent affirmative action cases establish some important principles:

► Affirmative action may be applied to hiring and promotions, as well as layoffs.

► A school district need not wait to be sued for and found guilty of past discrimination before it adopts an affirmative action plan.

► Statistics showing that minorities are substantially underrepresented in the school board's workforce when compared to the available labor pool may be enough to justify affirmative action.

► Except in cases of "particularly egregious conduct" by employers, the law imposes certain limits on the scope of race-conscious remedies that a *court* can order, but these limitations don't apply to voluntary plans.

Although the Supreme Court didn't clarify every issue involved in the fairly muddled area of affirmative action law, its clear endorsement of the principle of affirmative action makes it more likely that lower courts will uphold voluntary affirmative action plans aimed at rooting out vestiges of past discrimination.

This probable result represents a significant defeat for the Reagan Administration—and a clear victory in the continuing struggle to eliminate racial discrimination by school boards and other employers.

In the wake of the Supreme Court decisions, the Justice Department in August quietly withdrew federal challenges to minority hiring plans in Chicago and Indianapolis. The assistant attorney general indicated the department will "review" affirmative action plans it had previously challenged in more than 40 other jurisdictions, presumably with an eye toward withdrawing its objections.

—Mike Simpson, NEA Office of General Counsel

have been doing,

Kindergarten
Writing to Read†
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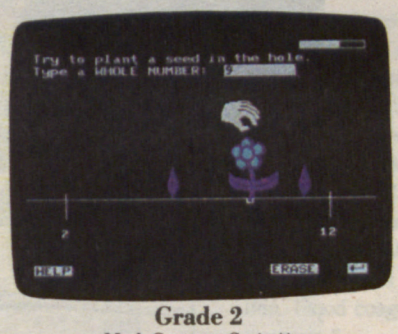
Grade 1
Bouncy Bee Learns Words
(K-Grade 3)*



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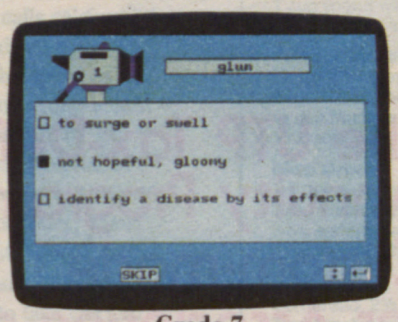

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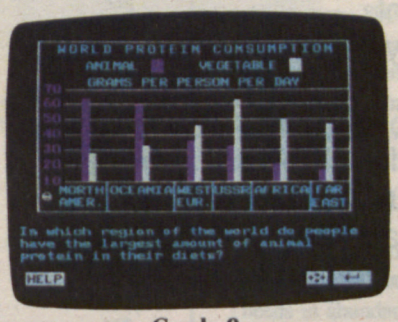

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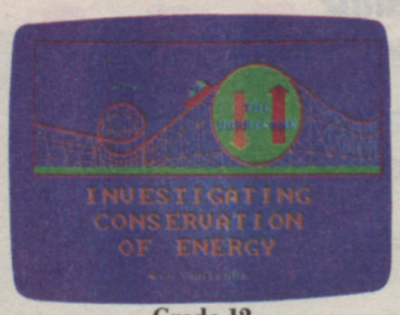

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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

You Are What You Eat

Boning Up On Calcium

Everywhere you turn, it seems, there's another warning about osteoporosis—the crippling condition in which bones become so thin and brittle that they break easily. Between 15 and 20 million Americans suffer from osteoporosis—the vast majority of them women.

Since osteoporosis results from loss of calcium from the bones, it would seem easy to remedy by increasing the intake of this important mineral. Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

Despite advertising campaigns hyping calcium as an osteoporosis panacea (and pumping the annual sale of calcium supplements past the $150 million mark), researchers are unable to find a single shred of evidence linking dietary calcium and bone density. In fact, some researchers go so far as to suggest that massive calcium intake may be counter-therapeutic. Dr. Richard Mazess of the University of Wisconsin calls calcium "the laetrile of osteoporosis." And, he notes, excess calcium inhibits the absorption of vitamin D, which is necessary for strong bones.

Independently conducted studies by Dr. C. Christiansen of Goldstrup Hospital in Denmark and Dr. B. Lawrence Riggs of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., have cast even greater doubt on the calcium hypothesis. Riggs tells his patients not to take calcium supplements. But he adds that to be on the safe side, they should try to get 1,000 milligrams a day from such sources as milk, cheese and yogurt: "Osteoporosis is a serious disease, and the nutritional value of dairy products goes beyond calcium."

So what's the answer? Lifestyle may offer the key. *(See box below.)* The consensus within the medical community is to avoid smoking (it doubles your risk of developing osteoporosis) and go easy on alcohol. As few as two alcoholic drinks a day double a person's chances of getting the disease. In addition, preliminary studies indicate weight-bearing exercise—running and walking, for example—may slow bone loss and prevent osteoporosis.

A final caveat. The research debunking the conventional wisdom that increased calcium prevents osteoporosis *doesn't* mean you needn't worry about adequate calcium in your diet. Calcium is essential for muscle contraction, blood coagulation, and intercellular "cement."

Unfortunately, the Recommended Daily Allowance—800 mgs—is hard to come by. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, not even one American in three consumes the recommended amount. And many vegetables that are high in calcium are also high in oxalic acid, phytic acid, and tannic acid—all of which can inhibit calcium absorption.

Still, there's no shortage of foods that offer the body the calcium it needs in abundance. *(See box at left.)*

Anyone for waffles and raw oysters?

Nutrition: A Quick Quiz

The best way to get the vitamins and minerals your body needs is through proper diet. But how well do you know your nutrition?

From the choices listed here, try to select the meal that will give you the most nutrients (assume all portions are similar in size).

IRON: cheddar cheese, round steak, or baked cod

VITAMIN A: steamed corn, asparagus, or broccoli

THIAMIN (vitamin B-1): enriched white rice, mashed potatoes, or stewed tomatoes

RIBOFLAVIN (vitamin B-2): orange juice, whole milk, or beer

VITAMIN C: apple, grapefruit, or banana

Answer: round steak, broccoli, rice, milk, grapefruit.

Foods High In Calcium

Milk Group	Milligrams of Calcium
1 cup skim milk	302
1 cup 1% low-fat milk	300
1 cup 2% low-fat milk	297
1 oz. American cheese	174
1 oz. Cheddar cheese	204
1 oz. Swiss cheese	272
1 oz. Muenster cheese	203
½ cup 2% cottage cheese	77
1 cup low-fat plain yogurt	415
1 cup yogurt with fruit	345
½ cup vanilla ice cream	88
Fruit/Vegetable Group	
½ cup bok choy	126
½ cup fresh collards	179
½ cup fresh turnip greens	126
4 oz. tofu	145
Meat Group	
7-9 raw oysters	113
3 oz. salmon with bones	167
3 oz. sardines with bones	372
3 oz. canned shrimp	99
Grain Group	
Cornbread, 2½×2½×1½	94
Two 4-inch pancakes	116
7-inch waffle	179
Combination Foods	
½ cup macaroni & cheese	181
¼ 14-inch pizza	332
1 cup cream of mushroom soup	191
1 cup cream of tomato soup	168
1 cup spaghetti, meat balls & sauce	124
1 beef taco	174

Source: National Dairy Council

Lifestyle Factors Inhibiting Absorption of Calcium

- Smoking
- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Inactivity
- Aspirin and many other medications
- Diet high in protein (over 95 mgs a day)
- Too little vitamin D (under 400 international units a day)

Source: Columbia Hospital for Women, Washington, D.C.

Vitamin and Mineral Supplements: Who Needs Them?

If you eat a variety of fresh, well prepared foods, chances are you don't need to take vitamin or mineral supplements. But if one or more of the following statements describes you, you may want to consider a supplement:

- ► You rely heavily on processed, convenience, or carry-out foods.
- ► You skip meals frequently.
- ► You eat a limited number of foods rather than a wide variety.
- ► You consume less than 1,500 calories a day.
- ► You have an illness or injury, or are recovering from one.
- ► You're under a great deal of stress.
- ► You smoke.
- ► You drink alcohol.
- ► You take medications, such as oral contraceptives, that rob your body of certain vitamins.

Look for a supplement that offers a balanced selection of all the vitamins and minerals, since too much of any one can cause deficiencies of the others. Also try to pick a supplement that supplies those nutrients not commonly added to processed foods: vitamins E, B-6, and B-12, folic acid, biotin, pantothenic acid, magnesium, zinc, copper, chromium, and selenium.

Remember that as an Association member you can purchase low-cost, high-quality vitamin products through NEA's Pharmacy. For more information contact your state Association or the NEA Special Services Response Center, 51 Monroe St., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850.

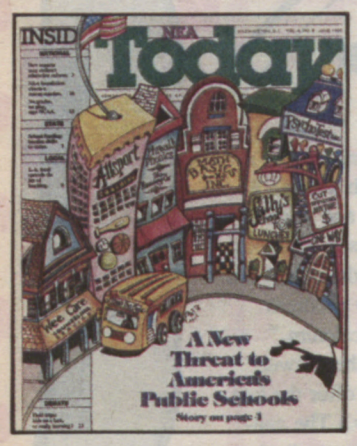
Two All-Beef Patties...

As more and more health-conscious consumers have focused attention on fast food ingredients, the various chains have changed their products—for the better. If you choose carefully, it's now possible to buy a fast-food meal that's *not* overloaded with fat, sodium, sugar, and calories, says the Washington, D.C.–based Center for Science in the Public Interest, long a harsh critic of the fast food industry.

But you have to be extremely selective. Next time you join the almost one in five Americans who dine on fast food each day, follow these suggestions for a healthier meal:

- ► Opt for the salad bar rather than french fries (but shun those bacon bits, croutons, and fried noodles).
- ► Discard any greasy breadings or skin.
- ► Enjoy a baked potato, but go easy on the rich toppings.
- ► Choose a smaller hamburger, topped with little or no sauce (and skip the cheese and bacon).
- ► Better yet, choose a roast beef sandwich. Ounce for ounce, the fattiest burger has about 17 times as much fat as the leanest roast beef.
- ► Choose milk (low-fat if possible) or juice, not sodas or milkshakes.

Letters



In Defense of Sylvan

I am a retired life member of NEA. During my public career, I served as executive vice president of my local EA and director of my state EA, in addition to other leader roles over a 25-year period.

I am currently co-owner of two Sylvan Learning Center franchises. The June cover story on privatization contains several misrepresentations of our role in the private sector.

First: any teacher who "tutors" outside school hours for a fee does what we do: i.e., provides supplemental help to individuals having a need not otherwise met by either public or private programs of education.

Second: we are not a school, nor do we have a curriculum either directly or indirectly competing with anyone except our fellow "tutors."

Third: we did not, somehow, lose our skills acquired over our public careers, when we "retired" to the private sector.

Fourth: although Kinder-Care Learning Centers, Inc. is the principal stockholder in the Sylvan Learning Corporation (a publicly held company), its role is to provide a variety of support services to us, the independent franchisees.

Your authors imply some sort of inferior qualifications of us and our staff. We in fact are *true* professionals in that we set our own fees and schedules. We continue to set higher standards for ourselves, and consequently for our competition.

Let us not forget why we have public education. In part it is to prepare us and our fellow citizens to take our place in the free enterprise system.

Peter Evans, Jr.
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

A Waste of Time?

I heartily agree with Manu Patel's assessment of field trips: they are a pain to plan and execute (Debate, June). Why? Mostly because of the rigid and unforgiving attitude displayed by Mr. Patel and others of his ilk.

The problems Mr. Patel outlined can be easily overcome with a modest amount of interstaff cooperation, and the problems with student work can be handled by outlining their responsibilities in advance. Indeed, the biggest hurdle in pulling off a field trip seems to be changing the attitudes expressed by Mr. Patel.

A day out of school? Yes indeed. Who loses when we take a field trip? Those individuals who "don't want to go," because it is they who miss some of the best education opportunities available... those presented in the world around them.

K.E. Raisanen
Ontonagon, Michigan

"Who are the winners? Only students who are looking for a day of fun." Yes, Mr. Patel, they usually are!

Can learning take place where there is no joy? Why shouldn't education be fun? Does education only take place in a structured classroom?

Perhaps more concern for the individual student and less concern for self and the establishment will lead to better education practices.

Robert C. Hamman
Kenton, Ohio

God help the science department at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., and the republic in which it exists. One department under Patel, with social negativism for all.

Long live Patel. Long live the unbending school schedule. Long live uninterrupted sequential presentation.

(Wake me up when it's over.)

R. Davis
Wilford, New Hampshire

Field trips *are* super if students can focus what they have been studying on what they see when they take the trip.

To do this, I always prepare a worksheet, which students are required to complete during the trip. It's handed out as we prepare to get on the bus, and it's due when the students get off. Some of the time on the bus is therefore spent "on task" as students discuss the worksheet and use the time to write answers.

Rod Smith
Oskaloosa, Kansas

Elevator Music

"Roll Over, Beethoven" (Trends, June) caused me to reach high C.

As a music teacher, president of the Rhode Island chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and a professional opera singer, I have been trying for many years to convince some of my colleagues that the use of background music perpetuates the decline of listening skills.

Indeed my first confrontation in this area occurred when I was a student teacher. For some reason the administration felt that playing "elevator" music in the halls would calm the students. Of course the only effects were that the students blocked out the music and talked more loudly to be heard. And, since they began to associate this nonrock music with talking, every time I played something classical in my class they would begin to talk.

I'm afraid the researcher you quote as saying background music "facilitates better classroom management" sounds like the cliche teacher evaluator who thinks a teacher is doing a good job just because s/he runs a quiet classroom. I believe I was hired to be much more of an *educator* than a *manager*.

Carl D. Swanson
Duxbury, Massachusetts

Student Teaching

Until every teacher within a district is fairly assigned a student teacher and the supervising teacher is truly supervised, the problem is even greater than pay for the supervisor (Debate, May).

I object to student teachers' being given full responsibility for the entire time they are present (often within the first week of their term). I object to supervisors' capitalizing on the presence of the student teacher to retire to the lounge or office to correct papers, do records, run dittoes, and/or study their own course work for the next degree, which will allow them to make more money than the teachers who are back in their classrooms working!

I question the professionalism with which the college, local districts, and individual teachers look upon the act of training the teachers of tomorrow.

NEA ought to take a stance on equal rights for all members to be involved in the training of student teachers if they so wish, rather than local politics being the deciding factor.

Beverly Hunt
Ypsilanti, Michigan

Book It or Trash It?

I have read with great interest the letters you have printed concerning Pizza Hut's Book It program. Motivation is the key to getting students interested in learning, yet it is a very real stumbling block for *many* teachers. Even if Book It helps motivate only one student per class that participates, then it will be successful.

It is naive to think that children (and their families) are not already eating pizza, but it is sadly more naive to think that teachers should always "come up with their own incentives to encourage reading," as one letter writer put it.

Hats off to Pizza Hut and the Book It program. I can only hope other corporations will follow their lead and develop useful teaching/motivation materials of such good quality at no cost to the teacher.

Jill Ken-Wohlrab
New Smyrna Beach, Florida

Your April article on the Book It program illustrates the dangerous ways adults are starting to cater to children. Book It is nothing more than a bribery program developed to ease the conscience of the educator and parent(s) who fail to stress to children the need to be educated in today's society.

Children who participate in this program are only learning how to manipulate and blackmail their fellow citizens. First we bribe children to do their homework. Now we bribe them to read. I guess next we'll bribe them to go to school. When does it end?

Wilma Rice
Montclair, New Jersey

True Professionals?

We ask others to view us as professionals and pay us as professionals. Yet at professional conferences we're asked to pay our own registration, room, meals, and transportation, in addition to furnishing our own materials.

Perhaps when we value each other as professionals, others will follow our example.

Barbara Hopkins
Lincoln, Nebraska

Gifted Disqualified

Recently I had a very unusual experience involving my class of gifted students. Several entered a writing competition, which was an optional activity sponsored by a local historical group. Many of the essays were done in a very creative manner rather than simply sounding as if they had been copied from an encyclopedia.

We were contacted by one of the judges (an impartial participant and a nonmember of the supporting group), who informed us that they were instructed to disqualify many of our children's essays because they were "too good" and could not have been done by children only 11 and 12 years old! Because we had encouraged our children to strive for excellence and to work to their potential, they were penalized.

Giftedness is perhaps the most misunderstood exceptionality. People who would never think of making fun of a mentally deficient child have no problems with negative comments when dealing with the gifted.

It's important to remember that children who are gifted are just that: children first and gifted second. Their behavior can be as disruptive as any other child's, and their disappointment at being discriminated against is as real as that of a child experiencing discrimination because of race, religion, or any other reason.

Denise M. Esser
St. Augustine, Florida

For the 'Little Things': A Parent's Tribute to Teachers Everywhere

Our son changed junior highs midway in the eighth grade. He was placed in an accelerated math class. For some reason, this particular class was about six weeks ahead of his last school, and the curriculum people were considering placing him in a lower level. He was very disappointed.

Then one math teacher said, "I believe if he will come in to my classroom in the mornings before school to do extra work, I can have him on this level soon." He did, and she did, and he won the coveted math award at the end of the year.

That same eighth grade year, our son was fortunate enough to get a part in a school play, a musical. But by the time practice began, his voice was changing. The choir director completely rewrote the score so that our son could handle it with a voice that wasn't the same from day to day.

At this junior high there was a Spanish teacher who introduced our son to the joy of learning a new language. There was a coach who taught him responsibility and the value of teamwork.

His parents really appreciated all these good things—especially the days when their son came home happy because some teacher had made him feel good about himself. However, they never told the teachers how much all their efforts meant.

Our son died six years ago, of injuries received in a head-on automobile collision a few weeks before beginning his junior year at Texas A&M. There is no way his teachers can be repaid for what they did to enhance his life while he lived.

But if you're a teacher, reading today's negative headlines about the need for teacher accountability and career ladders, this is from all the parents in absentia from whom you have not heard and won't hear:

"Thank you for all you do, for every drop of energy, every concept you teach children to enable them to make their way in this complex, uncertain, yet wonderful world. Thank you for those unique qualities you possess that enable you to take these little people (with all their hopes, fears, strengths, weaknesses, distractions, and parental expectations) into your classroom when they're clean and courteous but also when they're grubby and grumpy.

"Thank you for not judging them, and thank you for performing that grandest marvel: teaching."

Lucille Raethka
Montgomery, Texas

Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. We reserve the right to edit letters for length.

Debate

Should records and tapes with sexually explicit lyrics be required to carry warning labels?

Brad Bower

YES

Blackhorse Pike (N.J.) Education Association member Dominick J. Giordano is an English teacher and a frequent speaker on teen issues. He taught a unit last year on rock lyrics' impact on students' lives. For a copy of the curriculum materials for that unit, write to Giordano at Triton Regional High School, Runnemede, NJ 08078.

One of my students unwittingly alerted me to the increasingly violent and vile nature of rock music.

We were discussing a news article about groups like W.A.S.P. and their lead singer, Blackie Lawless, who appears on stage wearing a codpiece with a buzz-saw blade between his thighs. During "The Torture Never Stops," Lawless pretends to pummel a woman dressed in a G-string and black hood. As fake blood cascades from the hood, he attacks her with the blade.

The 15-year-old's response was "So, that's entertainment. That's life."

Anyone who's spent much time teaching or observing teens is aware of this desensitized delirium. The teen response to lyrics that glorify drug abuse or videos that depict acts of violence is typically an unwholesome ho-hum.

Students often challenge me to "mellow out" and "go with the flow." "What do you listen to," they say, "Eazy 101? Opera?"

To their surprise, I confess to being something of a rock follower. I grew up on Dylan and the Beatles. I lifted weights to that music, and was lifted up by its message. But as a parent and teacher, I'm concerned about songs that glamorize drugs, incest, sadism, masochism, suicide, rape, and anarchy.

We didn't reach this pass overnight. The Beatles, Morrison, Joplin, and the rest sang of sex and drugs. The Stones' "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" was no nursery rhyme. But better access (MTV, cable, videos) to excess (explicit lyrics, orgasmic moans, sleazy sound effects) has pushed rock beyond the suggestive. What was once hinted at is now hammered home.

The rock industry, along with its raunch, has also given us Live Aid and Farm Aid. What's wrong with Parent Aid—the now voluntary album cover labels stating that the lyrics are X-plicit?

Opponents of such labeling systems place parents between rock and a hard place. They proclaim the futility of controlling access to music—then assign that mission impossible to parents.

Parents can't handle this mission on their own. They need help if they're to short-circuit this high-tech trash. Asking them to monitor the more than 25,000 songs produced each year is too much.

Even though I've worked with teenagers for the last 12 years, I was unaware of the lewd and crude nature of much hard rock until I discussed the lyrics with my classes. A labeling system would help parents tune in to what turns on their children. All that's needed is an agreement that record company executives will supervise their "children"—raunch and roll discs—and parents will supervise *their* children—the consumers.

I wouldn't expect this compromise to foment any youthful revolution. A sizable minority of kids I've spoken with actually advocate labeling. And even those opposed admit that it might keep "the little kids from listening." One 17-year-old student told me, "I'm a heavy metal freak, but I don't think young kids should listen to a lot of the songs." A 16-year-old said, "My 10-year-old cousin knows all Madonna's words and rolls on the floor like her. She's way too young to be dancing like that."

Most parents I've spoken with favor labeling. One commented that warning labels would help us in "buying records and becoming more aware of our kids' listening habits."

This woman was not a bluenose or a book burner. And I'm not a Mrs. Grundy. We reject censorship. All we want from the record industry is *self*-examination and a little responsibility.

So what if Frank Zappa zaps us with contempt? We are talking about people who are holding the First Amendment hostage. The battle is not over creative expression, but creepy exploitation.

If you don't believe it—take a test. Turn on the raunch. Listen to the sleaze. Then see if you want your children to "go with the flow."

Greta Pratt

NO

Jim Lindstrom is in his 15th year as a vocal music teacher at Forest Lake (Minn.) Senior High. He serves on the NEA Board of Directors. Despite his opposition to warning labels, Lindstrom doesn't condone, accept, or encourage the use of sexually explicit lyrics. He agrees there's a problem. He disagrees with the proposed solution.

The recording industry agreement voluntarily to put warning labels on records and tapes with sexually explicit lyrics raises serious questions. Is the use of labels a long overdue remedy to an increasingly pernicious problem? Or is this "solution" in fact a form of censorship disguised as caring protectionism?

Any final judgment would be premature, but there's already good reason to doubt that the labeling process is having the effect its advocates seek.

I recently asked a group of parents if they helped their children purchase records or tapes. The overwhelming response was "No!" What tangled logic, I wonder, warrants the conclusion that warning labels will miraculously transform parents into the prime purchasers of these items? Or, if the assumption is that printed warnings will dissuade teenagers from buying these records and tapes, then I wonder why the inquisitiveness of today's teens (and even *preteens*) is being so seriously underestimated.

It may be instructive to recall what happened when warning labels first appeared on tobacco products. Studies show that the immediate result was an *increase* in sales among young people. Consumption didn't decline until comprehensive efforts to expose the dangers of tobacco were initiated. A warning label all too often invites teenagers to sample the "forbidden" (and therefore all the more desirable) fruit.

The problem we confront is less the content of lyrics than the conscientiousness of parents. If parents were involved in the initial purchase of records and tapes, they could monitor the choices their children make and perhaps even join them for a "first listen." Parents could use this opportunity for a mature discussion of human sexuality and the value of responsibility.

The "deterrence" that the advocates of warning labels seek presupposes the active involvement of parents. If record companies were required to provide written lyrics to store owners, conscientious parents could then preview records prior to purchase. Parents committed to monitoring their children's purchases would determine for themselves whether a record was appropriate for their family. This approach would be more time-consuming, more demanding, less simplistic—and more effective. A warning label is no substitute for parental guidance.

Every time we approach a complex problem with a simple solution, we invariably create greater problems. The question that gnaws at me is, where will this quasi-censorship lead?

Might books be next? The right-wing ideologues who have objected to everything from *Romeo and Juliet* to *The Three Little Pigs* sound like exaggerated versions of today's warning label advocates. Granted, the record labelers don't share the fanaticism of book-banners and book-burners. But the underlying mentality is dangerously similar. Publishers beware.

The new protectionists who want to save us from record sellers are themselves selling something—fear! Fear that our children will be corrupted by the radical fringes of the rock world.

This fear obscures what I believe is the fundamental fact in this debate: we will not need to control the record industry if only we will devote more of our own industry to the art of parenting. It was Franklin D. Roosevelt who told us that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Those words are worth remembering today. If fear is the motivation behind the demand for warning labels, let's study, analyze, and understand that fear, then go about coming to terms with it rationally.

I would hope that those of us in the education community would advocate this route and forsake the path that brings us so near the danger—*and* ineffectiveness—of censorship. □

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